

Sunday 28 June 3pm Britten Studio

Hesse Lecture: Brett Dean

From viola desk to writing desk



Bettina Stoess

Brett Dean was born and studied in Australia before moving to Germany. He was a member of the Berlin Philharmonic for 14 years, during which time he began composing. His music is championed by leading conductors and orchestras worldwide, including Simon Rattle, Daniel Harding, Andris Nelsons, and Marin Alsop. Much of Dean's work draws from literary, political, environmental or visual stimuli, including a number of compositions inspired by artwork by his wife Heather Betts.

Dean began composing in 1988, gaining international recognition through works such as his clarinet concerto *Ariel's Music* (1995) and *Carlo* (1997), inspired by the music of Carlo Gesualdo. In 2009 Dean won the Grawemeyer Award for his violin concerto *The Lost Art of Letter Writing*, and in 2017 his second opera *Hamlet* was premiered at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, winning a South Bank Sky Arts

Award and International Opera Award. In 2022 Dean was awarded the Ivor Novello Award for Chamber Ensemble Composition for *Madame ma bonne soeur*, and in 2023 he won the Ivor Novello Award for Orchestral Composition for his Cello Concerto.

Dean's 2025/26 season features the world premiere of *Of One Blood* at Munich's Bayerische Staatsoper in May – an opera with libretto by Heather Betts-Dean exploring the relationship between Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I; and the world premiere of his String Quartet No.4 (*A Little Book of Prayers*) at Carnegie Hall, New York – given by the Belcea Quartet and composed in memory of their former second violinist Laura Samuel. In other highlights, Dean conducts Aurora Orchestra, is soloist in his Viola Concerto with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, and is composer-in-residence and performs at the Krzyżowa Music Festival. Dean's season closes with the world premiere at the BBC Proms of a new song cycle, *The World's Wife*, for Claire Booth and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Dean was composer-in-residence of the London Philharmonic 2019–23, and at the Wigmore Hall for the 2023/24 season. He has just been announced as composer-in-residence of the Berlin Philharmonic for the 2026/27 season.

Duration: approx 60'

no interval