

## Mr Tommy Tycho AM MBE

The degree of Doctor of Music (honoris causa) was conferred upon Tommy Tycho AM MBE at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music graduation ceremony held at 11.30am on 4 April 2007.



Pro Chancellor John McCarthy with Tommy Tycho at the conferring ceremony, photo, copyright Memento Photography.

### Citation

Pro Chancellor, I have the honour to present Thomas Tycho AM, MBE for admission to the degree of Doctor of Music honoris causa.

In 2007, Tommy Tycho celebrates 63 years as a virtuoso pianist, conductor, composer and arranger. Tommy has earned an international reputation for musical excellence. The genius of Tommy Tycho makes him one of that charmed inner circle of musicians – prolific, of extraordinary quality and equally at home in any genre of music, which sets him apart from his peers in Australia.

Tommy began piano lessons at five and was soon recognized as a child prodigy. At the age of ten he performed Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue' with the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra. He was mentored by some of Europe's finest musicians. He studied piano with Egon Petri, harmony and counterpoint with Leo Weiner and Zoltan Kodaly. After completing a Diploma in Conducting and Composing at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, his degree studies were interrupted by his internment into a forced labour camp during World War 11. He later resumed his degree studies but fled Hungary during the communist takeover of his country, thus ending any chance of completing his formal education.

After arriving in Australia in 1951, Tommy's musical career quickly 'took off'. Within eighteen months his musical talents had taken him from a pianist on ABC Radio to the Musical Director of the 7 Network, a position he held for 20 years during the hey-day of televised variety in Australia.

Tommy's credits clearly display his versatility. They include thousands of orchestrations, composing and arranging over 1,500 pieces of music including 3 overtures and 3 concertos, 68 original scores for movies including 'Reckless Kelly' and 'Young Einstein', the Medal Ceremony music for the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games and over 75 recordings. He has conducted all major symphony orchestras in Australia and has been Musical Director for many of Australia's major music events, including nine Royal Command Performances, the Opening of the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Entertainment Centre, Australia Live celebrating Australia's Bicentennial on Channel 9, the Newcastle Earthquake Relief Concert and the Darwin Relief Concert following the devastating Cyclone Tracy. After 20 years, the most performed score of our National Anthem performed at major sporting and formal events, is still the arrangement by Tommy Tycho.

Tommy Tycho has always given his talent generously to help charities and to mentor young performers. He is patron of the City of Sydney Performing Arts Challenge, the Australian Entertainment 'MO' Awards, The Pan Pacific Music Camps Association and an Honorary consultant for the Talent Development Program for the NSW Department of Education and Training. Tommy has been honoured for his services to the music

industry and the broader community with an MBE, and a Member of the Order of Australia. He has been honoured as Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Producers and Directors Guild of Australia and the Variety & Soul Award from the Variety Club of Australia.

Pro Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Music honoris causa, performer, composer, arranger, educator and patron of the arts, Maestro Tommy Tycho, and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.