

Australian composer **Lee Bradshaw** works across opera, orchestral and chamber music, with a focus on projects that engage directly with contemporary historical, cultural and social narratives. His work is often shaped by moments of crisis and transformation, seeking to unite artistic form with social and historical urgency.

His opera *Zarqa Al Yamama* (2024), commissioned by the **Saudi Ministry of Culture**, marked a historic milestone as the first grand opera staged in Saudi Arabia. Premiering at the **King Fahd Cultural Centre** in Riyadh, the production brought together an international and Saudi cast including **Dame Sarah Connolly**, Serena Farnocchia, Aleksandar Stefanoski, Amelia Wawrzon, Paride Cataldo, Sawsan Albahiti, Reemaz Oqbi and George von Bergen. With an Arabic-language libretto, the work explores themes of prophecy, ignored warnings and sacrifice, and stands as a significant example of cross-cultural collaboration at a moment of cultural transformation.

Bradshaw's *Requiem "For Those Left Behind"* (2025) was premiered at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, becoming the first Australian classical work to be premiered in Egypt. Commissioned by conductor Nayer Nagui and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Orchestra, the work coincided with the 75th anniversary of Egyptian-Australian diplomatic relations. Addressing the bipartisan tragedy of civilian suffering in Gaza and Israel, it creates a space for collective reflection and grief.

His chamber work *Four Rooms* (2025), a string octet premiered by **Flinders Quartet** and the **Australian Youth Orchestra** Chamber Players, addresses youth mental health and the particular pressures faced by creative communities. Dedicated to the late violinist Manny Arcaro, the work draws young performers directly into the subject matter, creating a platform for both expression and reflection.

Memory and history continue to inform Bradshaw's work in the chamber opera *Theresienstadt/Terezín*, currently in development. The project expands on his piano quintet *January 27, 1945* (2025), co-commissioned by the **Australian Festival of Chamber Music** and the **Brundibár Arts Festival**, and forms part of a broader triptych alongside the *Ma Ha ish Variations*, written for German-Israeli ensemble **Trio Delyria**. Together, these works engage with questions of memory, artistic legacy and cultural survival.

Forthcoming projects include the symphonic work *Barefoot Through Hiroshima* (2027), being developed in collaboration with Markus Rindt and Therese Menzel of the **Dresdner Sinfoniker**. Drawing on Keiji Nakazawa's *Barefoot Gen*, the work combines symphonic forces with traditional Japanese instruments and animated visual elements to explore the enduring legacy of nuclear trauma.

Bradshaw's collaborators include Dame Sarah Connolly, Baiba Skride, Harriet Krijgh, the Flinders String Quartet, Orchestra Svizzera Italiana, Amira Medunjanin and Ivan Vukčević, reflecting a practice that operates across international performance contexts.

His work is anchored not in abstraction, but in the lived experiences of communities navigating transformation, grief and renewal. As *The Standard* (UK) has observed, he is "a composer with an ear for both scale and intimacy, unafraid to take on historic subjects with contemporary resonance."