

MEDIA RELEASE – THE MAGIC FLUTE SYDNEY SUMMER 2016

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* is back for more wonder and delight.

30 DEC – 14 JAN | JOAN SUTHERLAND THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Conductor **Rory Macdonald & Tahu Matheson** | Director **Julie Taymor**



Sydney, Australia: From the creative talent that brought us *The Lion King* comes *The Magic Flute* – a fantastical theatrical adventure for audiences of all ages. **Julie Taymor's** wildly imaginative production returns in 2016 after hugely successful seasons in 2015, featuring whimsical stylised costumes and huge puppetry in a jaw-dropping show to entertain the child in us all. *The Magic Flute* plays at Sydney Opera House from 30 December 2015 to 16 January 2016.

With all its spectacle, action and humour, this is the perfect opera for all the family.

“Expect plenty of magic effects from start to finish with everything from a fire-breathing serpent to wiggling and dancing bears, and what’s not to love about a tale of star-crossed lovers.” *The Daily Telegraph*, 2014

From the moment our hero Tamino leaps on stage with a snake in pursuit, the show is a fast paced adventure with mystery and challenges to overcome. With startling costumes, sprightly stilt walkers, giant puppets and a modern English translation, the production literally brings a new dimension to Mozart’s much-loved masterpiece.

“Taymor’s conception and design is pure delight, awakening the magic of childhood and the spirit of popular pantomime... Huge creatures appear and vanish as in a dream, birds sweep and soar controlled by silent puppeteers...” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2014.

“The stage goes right into the audience...and from time to time puppet birds and other creatures seem to be flying right above our heads...dazzling.” *The Guardian* (Australia), 2014

Artistic Director of Opera Australia, **Lyndon Terracini** says “I love this production by Julie Taymor and audiences do too as they keep coming to see it. I saw Rory McDonald conduct *The Magic Flute* in Copenhagen and I was so impressed I engaged him to conduct our 2016 production. It has a terrific cast. It’s so exciting when you’ve got someone like Hannah Dahlenberg knocking out those high Fs in the Queen of the Night arias and Daniel Sumegi has the wonderful low notes so evident in our recent production of *Don Carlos* – he’ll make an imposing Sarastro.”

Thinking of bringing the kids?

If your kids are a little too enthusiastic to sit still for two hours, why not bring them to the ‘Relaxed Performance’ on Thursday 7 January at 11am. At this performance, it’s fine for some chatter, and to go in and out of the theatre as needed.

About the production

In 2002, in the wake of the massive success of the award-winning Broadway musical *The Lion King*, New York’s Metropolitan Opera approached Julie Taymor with a challenge to create a new vision for Mozart’s final work for theatre, to premiere in their 2006 summer season. Taymor took Mozart’s music and, using an idiomatic English

translation by American poet **JD McClatchy**, designs by **George Tsypin** and her trademark skills in visual art, puppetry, mime and dance, fashioned a 100 minute show designed to appeal to audiences of all ages!

About the opera

The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte) is a real puzzle – part opera, part play, part fairy tale. Written in Mozart’s final year, and premiering just two months before his death, the opera was an instant success, and a great source of pride to the composer. The story was written by librettist and impresario Emanuel Schikaneder, who performed Papageno, with Mozart’s sister-in-law Josepha Hofer performing the Queen of the Night.

The allegorical story is full of references to Freemasonry (both Schikaneder and Mozart were members), and the power of truth and knowledge over superstition. Prince Tamino is lost in a strange land when three ladies ask him to rescue a beautiful young girl, Pamina, with the help of a magic flute. He agrees, but the ladies and their ruler, the Queen of the Night, soon reveal they are not as trustworthy as he first thought. To add to the confusion, the wily bird-catcher Papageno, somehow manages to be both a help and hindrance...

This production is reproduced by Opera Australia from the original production of *The Magic Flute* by the Metropolitan Opera, New York

Creatives

Conductor **Rory Macdonald** (until 12 Jan)
Tahu Matheson (until 16 Jan)

Director **Matthew Barclay**
 Originally directed by **Julie Taymor**

Set & Design **George Tsypin**

Costume Design **Julie Taymor**

Puppetry Design **Julie Taymor & Michael Curry**

Lighting Design **Gary Marder**
 Original lighting design **Donald Holder**

Choreography **Matthew Barclay**
 Original Choreography **Mark Dendy**

Translation **JD McClatchy**

Performance information

Evenings at 7.30pm
 December 30
 January 7, 9, 12, 14

Saturday matinees at 1pm
 January 2, 9, 16

Thursday matinee at 11am
 January 7

Running time
 Two hours with one twenty minute interval.

Performed in English with surtitles.

Bookings

Tickets from \$49 (fees may apply)
 Children (16 years and under) \$59 (across all seating reserves)

Student Rush available at most performances: \$50 (fees may apply)

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