

MEDIA RELEASE**15 January 2018****Experience one of the world's most spectacular opera events****23 MARCH – 22 APRIL 2018 | FLEET STEPS, MRS MACQUARIES POINT****Puccini | Conductor Brian Castles-Onion | Director Andy Morton | Stage & Costume Designer Dan Potra**

Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour is now recognised as one of the world's greatest outdoor opera spectacles alongside events such as *Aida* at Luxor and *Turandot* in the Forbidden City.

Described as one of the top four opera open-air events in the world by *Signature Luxury Travel* and *Style* magazine, the annual event is a highlight of the Australian cultural calendar, attracting more than 250,000 attendees from around Australia and across the globe over the past six years.

Opera Australia expects the 2018 season will continue that successful run, with **Puccini's *La Bohème*** known as one of the world's all-time favourite operas, and the inspiration behind *Moulin Rouge* and the musical *Rent*.

This new production of *La Bohème* is set in a wintery 1960s Parisian landscape, featuring beautiful cobblestone laneways, glowing street lamps and classically bohemian costumes, along with fabulous special effects including snow falling on Sydney Harbour and fireworks illuminating the night sky completing the stunning picture.

Director Andy Morton has been charged with bringing this vision to life. Mr Morton has worked on the past five Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour productions and is delighted to be taking the reins of a new show for the first time. Celebrated set and costume designer Dan Potra is making a welcome return to the outdoor stage after working his magic on *Turandot* in 2016.

Opera Australia's Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini is thrilled 'his brain-child' has gone on to become such an international success.

"Watching this event evolve over the past six years has certainly been an exciting time. To see all the elements come together so spectacularly each year and to see how much joy it brings to the audiences, who have really taken it to their hearts, it's been incredibly satisfying," Mr Terracini said.

"It's no wonder the event has become such a hit with visitors. With its harbour-side setting, spectacular views of the famous Sydney skyline, the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, along with a monumental set, stunning costumes, world-class performers and a nightly burst of fireworks, it's an unforgettable experience."

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The custom-built site opens two and a half hours before the show starts, giving guests a fabulous opportunity to take in the spectacular views overlooking Sydney Harbour. Dinner and show packages are available with variable components that include a three-course dinner, interval drinks, program and performance.

The stunning “Platinum Club” – a pop up dining room, bar and lounge set amongst the tree tops – offers fine dining before the show, dessert high tea and drinks at interval. Indulge in three courses of exquisite French food, designed and prepared by the Platinum Club’s award-winning chefs. Each course is matched with premium Tyrrell’s Wines. Dinner is served from 5.30pm, so you can enjoy the sunset as you drink and dine before the show.

To complete this memorable night out, guests can arrive at the site by Water Taxi. Pick up points are around Sydney Harbour, dropping guests at Andrew (Boy) Charlton Pool, just metres from the entrance to Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour.

Opera Australia continues to welcome the NSW Government’s ongoing support and commitment to Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, through its tourism and major events agency Destination NSW.

Creatives

Conductor **Brian Castles-Onion**

Director **Andy Morton**

Assistant Director **Sally Hare**

Assistant Director **Trent Kidd**

Set & Costume Designer **Dan Potra**

Lighting Designer **Matthew Marshall**

Sound Designer **Tony David Cray**

Video Designer **Marco Devetak**

Choreographer **Kate Champion**

Cast

Mimi **Iulia Maria Dan*** | **Maija Kovalevska †**

Rodolfo **Ho-Yoon Chung*** | **Paul O’Neill †**

Musetta **Julie Lea Goodwin**

Marcello **Samuel Dundas*** | **Christopher Tonkin †**

Colline **Richard Anderson**

Schaunard **Christopher Hillier**

Benoît/ Alcindoro **John Bolton Wood**

Parpignol **Simon Gilkes**

Officer **Douglas McRae**

Sergeant **James Olds**

With the Opera Australia Orchestra and Opera Australia Chorus

* 23, 25, 28, 31 March; 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21 April

† 24, 27, 29 March; 1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22 April

Performance information

March 23 – April 22

Performance begins at 7:30pm

Site opens at 5pm for bar and restaurant venues.

Running time

Two hours and thirty minutes including one interval.

Performed in Italian with English and simplified Chinese subtitles.

Bookings

Tickets from \$99 (fees may apply)

Group and concession prices available for most performances.

Opera Australia Box Office

(02) 9318 8200

www.opera.org.au

Fleet Steps, Mrs Macquaries Point, Sydney

Media enquiries

Georgina Bible | HOSH Publicist

0431 452 609 georgina.bible@opera.org.au