

MEDIA RELEASE

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***Ghost Sonata* has its Australian Premiere in the eerie surrounds of Opera Australia's Scenery Workshop**

Opera Australia presents the Australian premiere of Aribert Reimann's rarely presented work, *Ghost Sonata*, in a dark new production by Greg Eldridge and staged in the industrial surrounds of the company's scenery workshop.

Based on the play by Swedish author August Strindberg *Ghost Sonata* is considered a one-of-a-kind experience. Equal parts thrilling, disturbing and dreamlike, it explores duality in the human condition: truth and lies, illusion and reality. The tale is as strangely poignant now as it was when it was first written in 1907.

Opera Australia's Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini says it is an apt production for the unique setting of The Opera Centre's Scenery Workshop stage, which is larger than the stage at the Sydney Opera House.

"Strindberg was an interesting character and this opera is an amazing piece. The singing is extreme and the powerful setting lends it something special, making the whole experience truly affecting," Mr Terracini said.

Australian director **Greg Eldridge** makes a powerfully haunting directorial debut with Opera Australia with a production designed to make the audience feel like they're in the middle of an existential crisis.

"Of the characters, they could all be supernatural, or none. They could all be mad, or all caught in the same brilliant light of clarity. The only certainty is that they are each a reflection of a different aspect of ourselves," says Greg.

Shanul Sharma, who began his career as a heavy metal singer before transitioning to opera, plays The Student, an innocent bystander with an uncanny ability. He is guided by The Old Man, played by industry veteran and long-time principal **Richard Anderson**. Together they enter this house haunted by secrets.

Senior Principal Artist and crowd favourite **Dominica Matthews** plays The Mummy alongside mezzo-soprano **Ruth Strutt** as the Dark Lady and Cook. Acclaimed award-winning tenor **John Longmuir** takes the stage as The Colonel, with **Danita Weatherstone** performing as The Young Woman.

Conductor Warwick Stengards breathes new life into Aribert Reimann's 1984 score leading an intimate chamber orchestra. The music reflects the world of the text - strange, otherworldly, and sometimes lyrical or deliberately discordant.

OA also welcomes celebrated young designer Emma Kingsbury to the company for the first time, who is set to make the most of the minimalistic and industrial workshop surrounds to invoke a supernatural atmosphere.

Creatives

Based on the play by August Strindberg
 Music by Aribert Reimann

Conductor | Warwick Stengards
Director | Greg Eldridge
Designer | Emma Kingsbury
Lighting Designer | John Rayment

Cast

The Old Man | Richard Anderson
The Mummy | Dominica Matthews
Dark Lady / Cook | Ruth Strutt
The Colonel | John Longmuir
The Student | Shanul Sharma
The Young Woman | Danita Weatherstone
Johansson | Virgilio Marino
Bengtsson | Alexander Hargreaves

Performance Details

Opera Australia Scenery Workshop, The Opera Centre, Dawson St, Surry Hills
 September 11 – 14
 Evenings at 7pm
 Performed in English
 Running time: approximately 90 minutes, with no interval.

Bookings

Single adult tickets from \$89 (fees may apply)
 Group and concession prices available for most performances.
 Opera Australia Box Office 02 9318 8200
[Purchase tickets online](#)

Media Enquiries

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