

MEDIA RELEASE
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Bright young talent shine for Opera Australia's 2019 Regional Student Scholarship Program



Three young singers from NSW and Tasmania have won highly sought after Opera Australia Regional Student Scholarships for 2019 that will take them to Sydney for a week-long intensive program with the national opera company in January.

The scholarship program gives high school students from regional areas the opportunity to develop their musical training with some of Australia's leading industry professionals. The program aims to foster a love of music for young Australians and to provide access to one of its most expressive forms – opera.

The 2019 Opera Australia Regional Student Scholarship winners are: **Ellie Rose** (Hobart, TAS), **Galatea Kneath** (Newcastle, NSW), and **Monique Grima** (Bathurst, NSW). A fourth scholarship recipient, **Edward Prescott** (Wagga Wagga, NSW), was also selected, but will be unable to participate in the program due to scheduling conflicts.

The four teenagers were selected from more than 50 finalists who auditioned across 19 towns during Opera Australia's 2018 National Tour of *Madame Butterfly*. Applicants were short-listed by Opera Australia's Regional Children's Chorus Master Joshua van Konkelenberg, with the winners selected by Opera Australia's Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini and Head of Music Tahu Matheson.

"This is a magnificent program for young singers," said van Konkelenberg. "It's so rewarding to see how much the standard of applicants and excitement for the program has grown over the years, especially as we see young singers who were part of an Opera Australia Regional Children's Chorus now auditioning for scholarships."

The students will arrive in Sydney for a week-long experience with exclusive behind-the-scenes insights into the working life of an opera singer. They will receive professional training from artistic, music, vocal, language and drama coaches, attend an opera performance and spend time backstage at the Sydney Opera House. The winners will also be given the chance to perform for Lyndon Terracini at the end of the week.

Launched in 2014, the Regional Student Scholarship builds on Opera Australia's National Tour community engagement activities, which aim to break down barriers of access to the arts outside the major cities. Together with its Regional Children's Chorus and Education Workshops, Opera Australia presents a range of ways for students and families from remote and regional Australia to connect with opera, both as participants and as audiences.

"The Regional Student Scholarship is one of the initiatives we're most proud of, and to be able to recognise and nurture the young talent in Australia is very exciting and an important part of what we do," said Terracini.

"We already develop young singers through our Young Artist Program, but the Regional Student Scholarship allows us to work with a younger group – senior secondary students – and to help them with their journey into the music industry from an earlier point in their careers."

For all media enquiries, please contact:

Madeleine Konstan | Publicist
 (02) 9318 8242 | 0413 933 544
 Madeleine.konstan@opera.org.au

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