

MEDIA RELEASE

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Casting call for Doggy Divas on Sydney Harbour

Four hopeful doggy divas with Danita Weatherstone, who plays Annina in *La Traviata*

Dogs who dream of stardom can have the op-paw-tunity of a lifetime this April with applications now open to appear in *La Traviata* at the world-famous Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour.

Dogs will appear centre stage during the glamorous Act 1 party scene of *La Traviata*, wagging their tails to the beat of the Brindisi as they perform alongside principal cast, chorus and dancers in front of an audience of 3,000.

Director Constantine Costi says the real-life Parisian woman behind *La Traviata*'s central character, Violetta Valery, was once gifted a small spaniel by an admirer.

"The courtesan Marie Duplessis would walk her dog through the park, arm-in-arm with dashing young men, so having a dog on stage adds to the characterisation and is a nod to the real-life courtesan we take inspiration from," he said.

No previous acting (or singing) experience is required! All small to medium-size dogs will be considered, but as *La Traviata* is set in Paris, French breeds are preferred. The dogs must be healthy and well-trained as there will be fireworks, noise, bright lights, thousands of people and lots of distractions.

Proud pup owners will be responsible for looking after their dogs whilst they are not on stage, and will receive two complimentary tickets to watch their doggy's magnificent opera debut.

For more details, and to apply for the role, please visit opera.org.au/dogs

Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour is supported by the NSW Government via its tourism and major events agency Destination NSW, Patron-in-Chief Dr Haruhisa Handa through the International Foundation for Arts and Culture, and Principal Partner HSBC.

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