

MEDIA RELEASE

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Opera Australia announces exciting 2019 season with five new productions for Melbourne



Opera Australia today announced their 2019 Melbourne program, promising a truly spectacular season with five new productions, including one Australian Premiere, and featuring some of the world's finest performers.

"It's a really incredible season" says Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini. "It will be one of the most outstanding seasons we have presented in recent years and we're proud to be offering an array of new productions, particularly the Australian premiere of Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims*."

Never staged in Australia before, a thrilling cast will perform Rossini's jubilant score in Damiano Michieletto's playful, large-scale production of *Il Viaggio a Reims* that brings some of the world's most recognisable artworks to life.

Alongside the Australian premiere, OA will present the Melbourne premiere of four productions this season. After receiving rave reviews, acclaimed director Sir David McVicar's productions of *Così fan tutte* and *Faust* will be performed in Melbourne for the first time. Also making its Melbourne debut is Robert Andrew Greene and Dean Bryant's popular operetta *Two Weddings, One Bride* and OA will return to the Coopers Malthouse in 2019 to present Aribert Reimann's chilling *Ghost Sonata*.

As well as the new productions two opera favourites will return; Elijah Moshinsky's iconic interpretation of *Rigoletto* and Graeme Murphy's much-loved production of *Turandot*.

The 2019 season will see Melbourne play host to some of the finest opera singers in the world.

"We have the best singers performing some of the western world's greatest music, in productions by world renowned directors; there is definitely something for everybody" declared Terracini.

Superstar **Jonas Kaufmann** teams up with **Ludovic Tézier** and **Eva-Maria Westbroek** for one night only to present an unforgettable concert staging of *Andrea Chénier* and soprano extraordinaire **Lise Lindstrom** will bring her acclaimed portrayal of the icy princess Turandot to Melbourne for the first time.

Booming baritone and rising opera star, Mongolian **Armartuvshin Enkhbat** makes his Australian debut as the clown faced *Rigoletto* alongside celebrated tenor **Liparit Avetisyan** as the Duke of Mantua.

Melbourne favourite **Teddy Tahu Rhodes** will make a welcome return to Opera Australia in 2019, starring in two productions; *Il Viaggio a Reims* and *Faust*.

Also gracing the Arts Centre stage will be the cream of Australia's opera singers, with the brilliant **Stacey Alleaume**, **Samuel Dundas**, **Lorina Gore**, **Julie Lea Goodwin**, **Warwick Fyfe**, **Sian Pendry**, **Shanul Sharma** and **John Longmuir** among those making role debuts this season.

"I'm also excited about the outstanding conductors performing in Melbourne next year. Not only do we have **Keri-Lynn Wilson** making her Australian debut with *Così fan tutte* and Australian **Daniel Smith** making his OA debut at the helm of *Il Viaggio a Reims*, but we are also thrilled to welcome back the legendary **Christian Badea** conducting Puccini's final masterpiece *Turandot*," says Terracini.

"The 2019 Melbourne season exemplifies why Opera Australia is considered one of the world's leading opera companies."

AUTUMN 2019**VERDI: *Rigoletto* | Conductor **Andrea Licata** | Director **Elijah Moshinsky****

Moshinsky's classic and much loved production of Verdi's *Rigoletto* returns to the Melbourne stage in full *La Dolce Vita* glamour with booming Mongolian baritone Armartuvshin Enkhbat donning the iconic clown face to make his Australian debut. He will be joined on stage by Australian sweetheart Stacey Alleaume making her role debut as Gilda, Armenian tenor Liparit Avetisyan as the Duke of Mantua - singing one of opera's most recognisable arias 'La donna è mobile' - and powerful bass Roberto Scandiuzzi as assassin, Sparafucile. **Arts Centre Melbourne May 11–29**

MOZART: *Così fan tutte* | Conductor **Keri-Lynn Wilson | Director **Sir David McVicar****

Acclaimed director Sir David McVicar's production of Mozart's third and final opera in the Da Ponte cycle makes its highly anticipated Melbourne premiere. A sensational cast will bring this opera to life under the baton of Canadian maestra Keri-Lynn Wilson, making her Australian debut. Soprano Jane Ede will assume the role of Fiordiligi while Anna Dowsley and Taryn Fiebig return to the roles of Dorabella and Despina respectively after receiving widespread praise for their performances in the 2016 world premiere of this production. Baritone Samuel Dundas and bass Richard Anderson will star as Guglielmo and Don Alfonso with Belarusian tenor Pavel Petrov rounding out the cast in the role of Ferrando.

Arts Centre Melbourne May 14-25**ROSSINI: *Il Viaggio a Reims* | Conductor **Daniel Smith** | Director **Damiano Michieletto****

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE. Rossini's exultant opera *Il Viaggio a Reims* finally makes its Australian premiere in grand fashion with a first-rate cast performing this co-production of the Dutch National Opera, Royal Danish Opera and Opera Australia. In Michieletto's playful interpretation, the world's most famous artworks come to life for a highly entertaining evening with some seriously impressive arias. This weird and wonderful world is portrayed by a stellar cast including Teddy Tahu Rhodes, Giorgio Caoduro, Shanul Sharma, Lorina Gore, Julie Lea Goodwin, John Longmuir, Juan de Dios Mateos, Sian Pendry and Warwick Fyfe with Australian conductor Daniel Smith making his long awaited OA debut. **Arts Centre Melbourne May 24 – June 1**

IN CONCERT**Giordano: *Andrea Chénier* | Conductor **Pinchas Steinberg****

For one night only superstar tenor Jonas Kaufmann returns to Melbourne to perform one of his most celebrated roles. Kaufmann will perform alongside Eva-Maria Westbroek singing Maddalena, renowned baritone Ludovic Tézier as Carlo Gérard and a host of Australian talent in a concert staging of Giordano's famous opera based on true events. They will be joined on stage by conductor Pinchas Steinberg, leading the performance in all its glory, and the Opera Australia Orchestra.

Hamer Hall, Arts Centre Melbourne August 13**SPRING 2019****PUCCINI: *Turandot* | Conductor **Christian Badea** | Director **Graeme Murphy****

Graeme Murphy's adaptation of Puccini's final opera returns to Melbourne for the first time since 2012 under the baton of distinguished conductor Christian Badea. Lauded as the most famous Turandot of our time, soprano Lise Lindstrom once again brings her performance of the icy, brutal princess to the Australian stage and will be joined by Walter Fraccaro as Calaf singing one of the most recognised tenor arias of all time – 'Nessun dorma'. **Arts Centre Melbourne November 19 – December 6**

GOUNOD: *Faust* | Conductor **Guillaume Tourniaire | Director **Sir David McVicar****

The 2019 season is rounded out with the Melbourne premiere of Sir David McVicar's production of this timeless opera about temptation and redemption. Teddy Tahu Rhodes plays the alluring yet debauched devil and soprano Maria Mudryak is the embodiment of beauty as the innocent, desirable Marguerite. French maestro Guillaume Tourniaire conducts this exciting cast including Saimir Pirgu playing the title role, Luke Gabbedy, Anna Dowsley, Dominica Matthews and Shane Lawrence. This elaborate production, first performed at Covent Garden, will leave you asking: what would I give up my soul for?

Arts Centre Melbourne November 27- December 7

REIMANN: *Ghost Sonata* | Conductor Warwick Stengards | Director Greg Eldridge

Opera Australia will return to The Coopers Malthouse, this time with Reimann's eerie *Ghost Sonata* based on the play by August Strindberg. Conductor Warwick Stengards will lead Richard Anderson, Dominica Matthews, John Longmuir, Shanul Sharma, Danita Weatherstone, Virgilio Marino and Alexander Hargreaves in this chilling new production by Australian director Greg Eldridge.

The Coopers Malthouse, Merlyn Theatre, Southbank September 25-28

STRAUSS, OFFENBACH, LEHÁR and more: *Two Weddings, One Bride* | Music Director Robert Andrew Greene | Director Dean Bryant

The Melbourne premiere of Robert Greene's operetta loosely based on a story by Charles Lecocq is guaranteed to deliver plenty of laughs and beautiful music with some of the world's most-loved tunes and favourite operetta waltzes, polkas and songs by Strauss, Offenbach, Lehár and Kálmán. An energetic cast comprising of Julie Lea Goodwin, Michael Petruccelli, Nicholas Jones, John Bolton Wood, Andrew Jones and Geraldine Turner, directed by Dean Bryant and in costumes by Oscar Award-winning designer Tim Chappel, will perform this raucous musical comedy accompanied by Robert Andrew Greene on piano and Yuhki Mayne playing the violin.

Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne November 7-10

NATIONAL TOUR

OA's annual national tour will this year take *Madame Butterfly* across QLD, WA and NT from **July to September in 2019.**

MUSICAL

TIM RICE and ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER: *Evita* | Director Hal Prince

Australian music legend Tina Arena stars as Eva Perón in the original West End and Broadway production of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Evita*, directed by Hal Prince. With more than 20 major awards to its credit, *Evita* charts the story of Eva Perón, wife of former Argentine dictator Juan Perón, from her humble beginnings through to the extraordinary wealth, power and status. Featuring some of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's best love songs including 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina', 'On This Night of a Thousand Stars' and 'You Must Love Me', Opera Australia, John Frost and David Ian are thrilled to bring this iconic musical to Australia in all its original glory. **Arts Centre Melbourne from December 5, 2018**

BERNSTEIN & SONDHEIM: *West Side Story* | Director and Choreographer Joey McKneely

One of the most celebrated musicals of all time will play a limited season at Arts Centre Melbourne in 2019. Presented in partnership with GWB Entertainment, Joey McKneely's vibrant and award winning stage production returns to Australia after wild acclaim world-wide. A modern retelling of Romeo and Juliet; this tragic love story tells the tale of two young people whose happiness is destroyed by the hate of two enemy camps in New York City's urban jungle. With Jerome Robbins' ground-breaking choreography and Leonard Bernstein's lush, boundary crossing score this iconic musical remains a timeless masterpiece. **Arts Centre Melbourne April 6 – 28**

Bookings

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(03) 9685 3700

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Media enquiries:

Janet Glover | Public Relations Manager

02 9318 8246 | 0412 601 816

Janet.glover@opera.org.au

Madeleine Konstan | Publicist

02 9318 8242 | 0413 933 544

madeleine.konstan@opera.org.au

Kate Warnock | Publicist

02 9318 8332 | 0419 316 135

kate.warnock@opera.org.au

Natasha Andrade | PR Coordinator

02 9318 8331 | 0406 664 510

Natasha.andrade@opera.org.au