

Opera Australia goes fully digital for world premiere season



Opera Australia will be the first opera company in the world to present a fully digital repertory season of three brand new productions when it opens its Sydney Winter Season on 28 June 2019 in the Joan Sutherland Theatre at the Sydney Opera House.

After staging a fully digital production of *Aida* in 2018 to great acclaim, Opera Australia (OA) is moving into the next phase of its digital program and producing three new productions; *Madama Butterfly*, *Anna Bolena* and *Whiteley*.

Incorporating fourteen 7 metre (23 feet) high, suspended LED screens that are choreographed to move seamlessly around the stage, creating a visual landscape that needs to be seen to be believed, and taking opera to a whole new level.

“As a national opera company we need to remain part of the 21st century and the Sydney Winter 2019 season will be a showcase of how we are approaching this challenge,” said Lyndon Terracini, OA’s Artistic Director.

Celebrating its boldness as a contemporary arts organisation still steeped in tradition, OA’s 2019 program is indicative of its forward thinking approach to the art form, with the introduction of the fully digital productions along with a mix of crowd-favourite revivals and concert presentations throughout the year, it will be a showcase of the finest talent both on and off the stage.

Internationally acclaimed Italian Director **Davide Livermore** returns to Sydney to direct *Anna Bolena* after achieving huge success with OA’s first digital production, *Aida* in 2018. Hailed by Time Out as “...not having had a more exhilarating night at the opera in a long time”, audiences are waiting with bated breath to see what magic Livermore will create with the first instalment of Donizetti’s Three Queens Trilogy.

For *Madama Butterfly* the creative dream team of Director/Choreographers **Graeme Murphy** and **Janet Vernon**, designer **Michael Scott Mitchell** and costume designer **Jennifer Irwin** have reunited along with digital artist Sean Nieuwenhuis to bring us the most innovative and visually stunning version of this opera ever seen on the Australian stage.

In keeping with the Company’s vision to create new and exciting opera’s that audiences actually want to see, OA has commissioned a new work about the tumultuous life of iconic Australian artist Brett Whiteley. Directed by **David Freeman**, composed by **Elena-Kats Chernin**, libretto by **Justin Fleming**, design by **Dan Potra**, and digital art by Sean Nieuwenhuis, *Whiteley* will be the most keenly anticipated production of the season.

The full 2019 season also boasts some of the finest singers in the world today, including **Ermonela Jaho** playing Anne Boleyn, **Jonas Kaufmann**, **Ludovic Tézier** and **Eva-Maria Westbroek** performing *Andrea Chenier* and **Lise Lindstrom** in *Turandot* to name just a few.

SYDNEY WINTER 2019

PUCCINI: *Madama Butterfly* | Conductor Massimo Zanetti | Director Graeme Murphy

Puccini's classic opera is set to be reimagined by the creative forces that brought last summer's run-away hit, *The Merry Widow*. Director Graeme Murphy will again be joined by Janet Vernon, Michael Scott-Mitchell and Jennifer Irwin along with digital artist Sean Nieuwenhuis to deliver the first of OA's 2019 digital productions. The visually stunning designs will be complemented by Murphy's choreography to capture the grace and gravity of this heartbreaking tale. Two outstanding casts will perform, including Karah Son and Mariano Hong playing Cio-Cio San, Sian Pendry and Agnes Sarkis as Suzuki and the powerhouse tenors Andeka Gorrotxategi and Diego Torre as the much maligned Pinkerton.

Sydney Opera House June 28 – August 10

DONIZETTI: *Anna Bolena* | Conductor Renato Palumbo | Director Davide Livermore

The next instalment of the season's digital productions is the first in Donizetti's Three Queens Trilogy, *Anna Bolena* (Anne Boleyn). Acclaimed director Davide Livermore returns to Sydney after his triumphant staging of *Aida* in 2018. A stellar cast has been assembled to tackle the acrobatic coltura, described by many as a masterclass in *bel canto* opera. Teddy Tahu Rhodes will play the ruthless King Henry VIII, with his ill-fated Tudor Queen played by glorious soprano Ermonela Jaho, back in Australia after her thrilling turn as Violetta in 2017's *La Traviata*.

Sydney Opera House July 2 – 26

KATS-CHERNIN & FLEMING: *Whiteley* | Conductor Tahu Matheson | Director David Freeman

This brand new opera about iconic Australian artist Brett Whiteley will be the third in the Company's digital series. Bringing together some of Australia's finest talent to tell the tumultuous life story of one of the most widely recognised and celebrated artists of our time, the production will honour the life and work of the outrageous Whiteley and his vivacious wife Wendy. Bringing this story to life are some great Australian artists; highly acclaimed composer Elena Kats-Chernin and playwright and librettist Justin Fleming, whose work is renowned for its warmth, wit and poignancy. Along with digital artist Sean Nieuwenhuis and well-known designer Dan Potra who together will create an immersive world of Whiteley incorporating the iconic artworks into the larger-than-life LED screens.

Sydney Opera House July 15 – 30

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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BOOKINGS

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