

MEDIA RELEASE

17 May 2019

Opera Australia launches 2019 Victorian Schools Tour



Opera Australia today launched its 2019 Victorian Schools Tour with a performance of *The Barber of Seville* at South Melbourne Park Primary. Thousands of Victorian primary school students will attend more than 80 performances between 20 May and 23 August.

This custom-designed schools tour production is supported by teachers' resource material to engage young audiences. The performance allows students the chance to experience professional opera in their classroom, as well as the opportunity to interact with singers and musicians during a Q&A after the show.

This year's tour will also celebrate the 10th Anniversary of OA's Auslan Shadow Interpreting program that incorporates performances in schools with Deaf and hard of hearing children across regional and metropolitan Victoria.

In the week-long Auslan Shadow Interpreting season the interpreter is in costume and on the stage, joining with the other characters to become part of the show. The program allows OA to connect with and cater for diverse audiences with different needs, providing them with the best live performance experience possible.

Opera Australia CEO Mr Rory Jeffes emphasised the importance of ensuring audiences from all generations and geographical locations in Australia are provided with ongoing opportunities to enjoy opera.

"Opera Australia's Schools Tour is one of many initiatives we have designed to encourage people of all ages, especially children, to engage with opera as an exciting form of entertainment and career prospect. We are thrilled to celebrate 10 years of Auslan Shadow Interpreting performances and hope to inspire young Victorian students to embrace what opera has to offer."

The Hon Martin Foley MP, Minister for Creative Industries, supports OA's commitment to make opera accessible to younger generations and highlights the responsibility of proactively strengthening the relationship between leading national arts companies and the wider community.

"The ability to think creatively is a vital skill at any age. By taking top-quality performances into school environments, Opera Australia is helping to inspire our next generation of creative and community leaders," said Minister Foley.

OA recognises the significant impact that music has on childhood learning and development shown by numerous studies and has continued to run the Victorian Schools Tour annually for more than four decades. In this time, OA has delivered live performances to more than 2.4 million students nationally. This production of *The Barber of Seville* first premiered in 2001, and will have completed approximately 1,500 performances by the end of its 2020 season.

OA also recently announced Bloomberg as a new supporting partner of the Schools Tour Program, permitting the tour to expand and visit more than 55,000 schoolchildren in NSW and VIC this year.

PATRON-IN-CHIEF
DR HARUHISA HANDA

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

PROGRAM PARTNER



Creatives

Originally directed by **Christine Anketell**
 Musical adaptation by **Brian Castles-Onion**
 Designer **Richard Jeziorny**
 Revival Director **Priscilla Jackman**
 Music Director **Raymond Lawrence**
 Revised Librettist **Liesel Badorrek**

Cast

Figaro **Jeremy Dube / Simon Meadows**
 Rosina **Eleanor Blythman / Rebecca Rashleigh**
 Count Almaviva **Joshua Oxley / Simon Meadows**
 Aunt Bartola/Basila **Jessica Heard / Rebecca Rashleigh**
 Pianist **Pamela Christie / Jane Matheson**

Performance Information

Touring

20 May – 23 August 2019

Suitability

Foundation – Year 6

Setup Time

60 minutes set up and 30 minutes pack down

Duration

60 minutes, including Q&A session

Cost

\$8 per student (no GST charged)

Minimum attendance

150 students (per session)

Bookings

PIE Productions
 1800 804 707
admin@pieproductions.com.au

Media enquiries

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About Opera Australia's Schools Tour

Every year, Opera Australia performs to approximately 60,000 primary school children throughout Victoria and New South Wales.

It's always a big event when the Opera Australia van rolls up to a school. Arriving at the start of the school day, complete with opera costumes, sets, four singers and a pianist. They take 60 minutes to set up in the school hall (or any large space), then they are ready to perform.

The schools tour presents up to three sessions in a day, and each session consists of a 50-minute performance of a complete opera followed by 10 minutes of questions and answers with the students and teachers.

Preparation and follow-up is all part of the experience: when a school books a performance, they receive an Opera Australia teacher resource pack. This includes suggestions for classroom extension activities both before and after the opera visit.