



2019 was a year of great success and learning, built upon a program that enabled new possibilities and much needed change. Everything we do at Opera Queensland celebrates and interrogates the extraordinary energy that opera creates. One of our goals is to “Lead Change in Opera”. To do this we must live it in every facet of our work.

PATRICK NOLAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO



2019 SNAPSHOT

HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Based in Brisbane and engaging with communities across the entire state, Opera Queensland presents works of the highest quality to local, national and international audiences.

Our commitment to introduce new audiences to the diversity and power of opera takes us into regional and remote communities across the state. Our annual main stage productions at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) are of the highest musical and theatrical standards.

254,524	18,744	67%
TOTAL REACH	REGIONAL QUEENSLAND REACH	QUEENSLAND ELECTORATES REACHED
265		90%
ARTISTS AND ARTS WORKERS EMPLOYED		RATE THE ARTISTIC QUALITY OF PERFORMANCES AS GOOD OR EXCELLENT
\$273,331		
OPERATING SURPLUS		

Opera Queensland respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Lands on which we perform. We pay respect to their ancestors who came before them and to Elders past, present and emerging.



PURPOSE

To make opera an integral part of Queensland life.

VISION

To enrich the lives of our diverse audience by creating thrilling opera with exceptional artists and partners, courageously supporting and advancing the art form.

OUR VALUES

RESPECT

Our culture is built upon our respect for our diverse audiences, our partners and each other.

LISTENING

Our art is founded upon the need to listen carefully and understand deeply.

COLLABORATION

We work openly with our partners, knowing strength is born of the trust essential for successful relationships.

AMBITION

We anticipate and respond to change and challenge ourselves to continually offer powerful experiences for our audiences, our partners and our artists.

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∞
183
TOTAL EVENTS

👤👤👤👤👤
254,524
TOTAL REACH

16
MAIN STAGE
PERFORMANCES

13,994
MAIN STAGE AUDIENCE

7,606
LEARNING & EDUCATION REACH

77
LEARNING & EDUCATION
PERFORMANCES &
WORKSHOPS

38
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENTS
EVENTS

15,512
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REACH

28,312
OTHER PERFORMANCES AUDIENCE

50
OTHER PERFORMANCES
(INCLUDING CO-PRODUCTIONS)

2
TV & RADIO
BROADCASTS

189,100
BROADCAST REACH

OUR REACH

A point of difference between Opera Queensland and some other Australian opera companies involves the delivery of our art form to regional areas of Queensland.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR DAVID SIDDLE, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS



LEADING A CHANGE IN OPERA

CHALLENGING THE SECTOR TO REIMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES AND POTENTIAL OF THE ART FORM

Opera Queensland's commitment to advancing the art form was strongly expressed in an intentionally diverse year of programming and creative developments. The company pushed the boundaries of collaboration, innovation, and interrogation of the art form.

Key elements of 2019's program included five new productions, three main stage productions and the presentation of two major creative collaborations.

PRESENT A BALANCED REPERTOIRE UNDER THE BANNER: CLASSIC, CONTEMPORARY AND FUTURE

Patrick Nolan's production of *Tosca*, an opera traditionally set in Rome in 1800, was reimagined into 1970s Italy, a politically tumultuous period that resonated strongly with the personal and social politics of the original.

Updated to 1970s Italy, the setting is just modern enough to seem contemporary, but distant enough to offer a chilling analytical perspective on the abuses of power that could be happening today.

THE AUSTRALIAN

COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND ARTISTS

In 2019 we introduced an exhilarating cross genre collaboration. Created in association with internationally renowned contemporary circus company Circa, *Orpheus & Eurydice* combined thrilling acrobatics, exquisite singing and striking video design to show opera as never seen before.

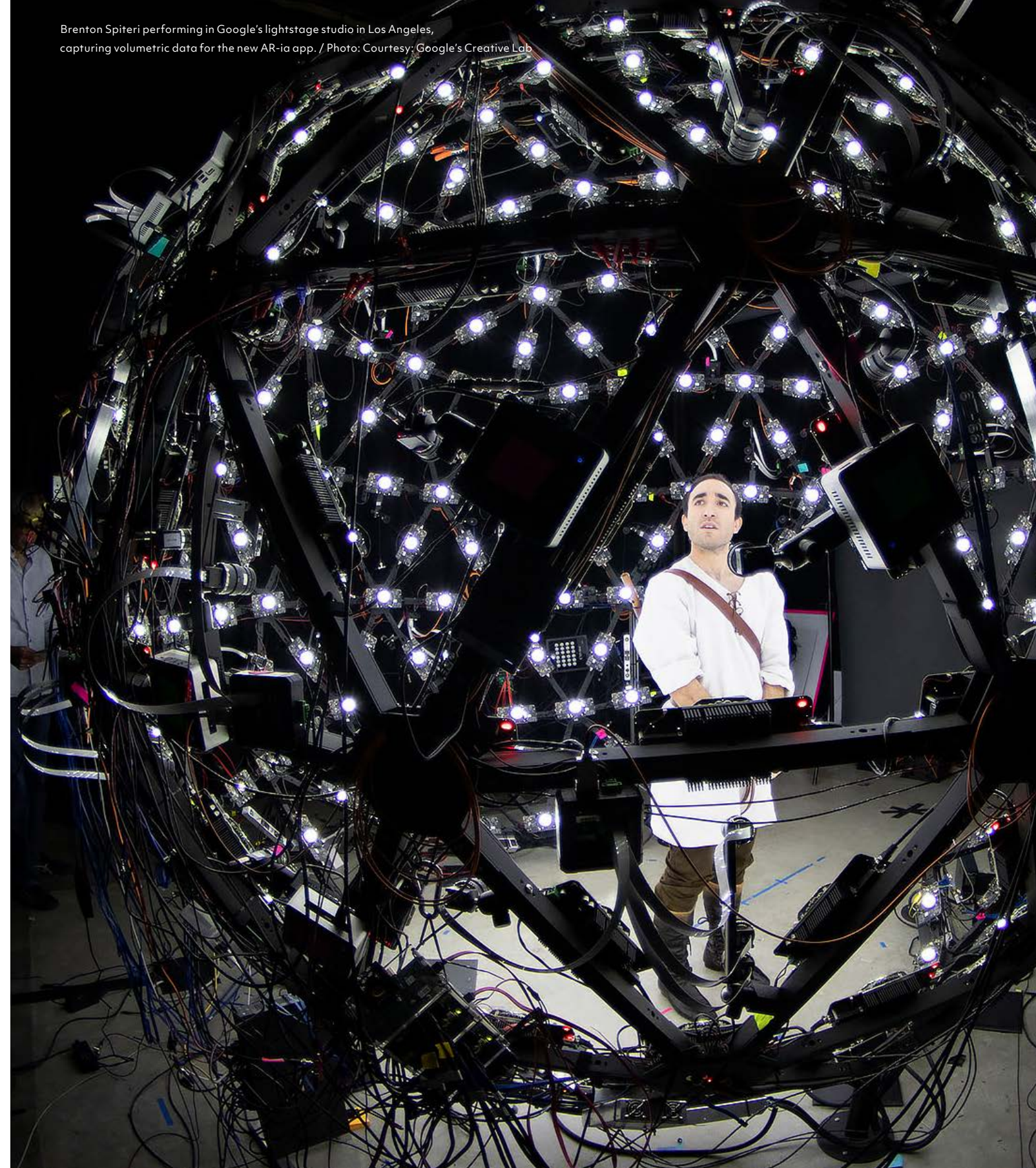
In collaboration with Bleach* Festival and Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Opera Queensland presented a monumental performance of Verdi's *Requiem* in April at HOTA, Home of the Arts. The large scale production featured close to 100 musicians with soloists and a chorus of sixty singers, bringing Verdi's heart-rending music to Gold Coast audiences for the first time in many years.

TEST NEW WAYS OF TELLING STORIES WITH MUSIC

We pushed the technical boundaries with the development of an app that used Augmented Reality to present opera in peoples' homes. This ground-breaking partnership with Google's Creative Lab offered a glimpse into the future of what's possible when cutting edge digital technology and opera are combined.

HOST AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM INTERROGATING THE ART OF OPERA

At the inaugural New Opera Workshop — NOW 2019, Opera Queensland brought together opera change-makers to explore what opera might be. One key outcome was a rigorous sector wide discussion about the role of women in opera, culminating in a national forum titled Gender, Equity and Diversity in Opera.



Everything we do at Opera Queensland celebrates and interrogates the extraordinary energy that opera creates.

PATRICK NOLAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO



3

MAIN STAGE
PRODUCTIONS

88%

AUDIENCE MOVED
AND INSPIRED BY
ORPHEUS & EURYDICE

1

WORLD PREMIERE

NEW OPERA WORKSHOP — NOW 2019

INVESTIGATING AND CELEBRATING THE EXTRAORDINARY ART FORM OF OPERA

A key innovation arising out of Opera Queensland's goal of leading change in opera was the inaugural New Opera Workshop — NOW 2019, 5–7 April.

In collaboration with Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Opera Queensland presented NOW 2019 in April, a forum for focused conversation and detailed exploration of the art form and its possibilities in the modern world.

The sector-wide initiative brought together leading Australian and international composers, librettists and producers, including renowned author and librettist David Malouf, who delivered the keynote address. ARIA Award-winning musician Megan Washington opened the forum, previewing excerpts from her new opera, commissioned by Opera Queensland and Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University.

Over the three-day event, a series of open forums, presentations and performances provided the backdrop for a robust and impassioned dialogue investigating opera in the 21st Century.

NOW 2019 SPEAKERS

Laura Bowler, Nicholas Cleobury, Paul Dean, Gerardo Dirié, Stephen Emmerson, Mary Finsterer, Paul Grabowsky, Elliott Gyger, Michael Halliwell, Tim Hopkins, Liza Lim, David Malouf, Natalie Murray Beale, Patrick Nolan, Jack Symonds, Megan Washington, Pierce Wilcox, Patrick Eakin Young

PERFORMERS

Rebecca Cassidy, Jessica Hitchcock, Jessica Low, Irena Lysiuk, Rachel Pines, Alex Raineri, Megan Washington

The conference was brilliant... I feel privileged to have been part of it.
LAURA BOWLER, COMPOSER & PERFORMER

NOW could have a unique position in the landscape of music both within Australia and on an international platform.
MARY FINSTERER, COMPOSER

It shows how important an event the conference was because it brought things into collision! I think it presents a great opportunity to develop and be more focused and careful on the messaging of the choices made around repertoire, stories and who makes them.
LIZA LIM, COMPOSER

Out of this weekend emerged a national conversation about the role of women in opera, precipitating a confronting, robust and fruitful dialogue, demanding change.
PATRICK NOLAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Patrick Nolan and Composer,
Megan Washington / Photo: Paul Harris

OPERA QUEENSLAND AND GOOGLE'S CREATIVE LAB COLLABORATION

PROJECT AR-ia

AN OPERA SET IN YOUR HOME



Opera is perhaps the least mobile art form of all. Producing an opera traditionally requires the combined forces of an orchestra, an ensemble of singers, a chorus, complex sets and costumes, and a small army of technicians. With this as a major source of inspiration, Google's Creative Lab approached Opera Queensland and invited us to explore what might be possible if Augmented Reality (AR) were to become part of the process of staging an opera.

More than 18 months in development, the result was the creation of a prototype app called AR-ia that used a condensed version of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* to explore how people might bring opera into their living rooms. Recorded in studios in Brisbane and Los Angeles, the app utilised 'volumetric capture' technology to record each singer's performance from 360 degrees. The final result allowed users to transform their homes into the world of *The Magic Flute*, replete with singers emerging from pictures that magically appeared on their walls or in one instance smashed down their walls to reveal an entire universe behind.

The app was launched at the 2019 ACM SIGGRAPH Conference and Exhibition, an internationally respected conference bringing technical and creative leaders from all over the world to share their research in science, art, animation, gaming, interactivity, education and emerging technologies.

The impact of COVID-19 has added weight to the urgency to find alternative ways to engage with opera. We are currently exploring ways of making the AR-ia app available to a broader audience and welcome inquiries from investors interested in being involved.

CREATIVE TEAM

Director Patrick Nolan
Original Design Concept
Genevieve Blanchett
Booth Design Penny Challen
Musical Director Narelle French
Audio Engineer Geoff McGahan

CAST

Tamino Brenton Spiteri
Pamina Emma Pearson
Sarastro Wade Kernot
**Camerata — Queensland's
Chamber Orchestra**

**PREMIERED AT THE 2019 ACM
SIGGRAPH CONFERENCE AND
EXHIBITION IN BRISBANE,
17–20 NOVEMBER 2019**

Google's Creative Lab in Sydney

Tea Uglow, Jonathan Richards, Sean Kelly, Samantha Cordingley, Jude Osborn, Kelly Cameron, Kirstin Sillitoe, Eden Payne.

Augmented Perception team in San Francisco and Los Angeles

Christoph Rhemann, Sean Fanello, Danhang Tang, Jay Busch, Philip Davidson, Paul Debevec, Peter Denny, Graham Fyffe, Kaiwen Guo, Geoff Harvey, Peter Lincoln, Wan-Chun Alex Ma, Jonathan Taylor, Xueming Yu, Matt Whalen, Jason Dourgarian, Shahram Izadi.

CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

ORPHEUS & EURYDICE

24 OCTOBER–9 NOVEMBER 2019 — PLAYHOUSE QPAC

How far would you go to save the one you love?

Heartbroken Orpheus has been granted the chance to bring his beloved wife Eurydice back from the underworld with one condition: he must not look at her — even for a moment — on their perilous journey home. But can he resist the desire to look into the eyes of his true love?

Created in association with internationally renowned contemporary circus company Circa, this was opera like never before — mixing thrilling acrobatics, profoundly beautiful singing and exquisite video design to take us to hell and back.

CREATIVE TEAM

- Conductor** Dane Lam
Director Yaron Lifschitz
Costume Libby McDonnell
Set Design Yaron Lifschitz
Lighting Alex Berlage
Video Boris Bagattini
Chorus Master Narelle French
Associate Director Heather Fairbairn
Associate Circus Director Bridie Hooper
Choreography Yaron Lifschitz, Bridie Hooper and the Circa Ensemble

CAST

- Orpheus** Owen Willetts
Eurydice & Amor Natalie Christie Peluso
Opera Queensland Chorus
Circa Ensemble
Ela Bartilomo Lachlan Sukroo
Jessica Connell Billie Wilson-Coffey
Jarred Dewey Scott Grove
Gerramy Marsden Alice Muntz
Queensland Symphony Orchestra

An astonishing, emotionally charged and radical production which defies operatic tradition.

JON ADAMS



NEW PRODUCTION



5,734

ATTENDANCE



PERFORMANCES



3

SOLD OUT
PERFORMANCES



LIBBY MCDONNELL,
MATILDA AWARD
WINNER FOR BEST
COSTUME DESIGN

I have rarely heard an audience so unanimously thrilled by something innovative in an opera performance. This is a wonderful experience of theatre.

NICHOLAS ROUTLEY, AUSTRALIAN STAGE



Natalie Christie Peluso (top) with Jessica Connell (left) and Owen Willetts / Photo: Jade Ferguson

COLLABORATIONS

2019 was a year of boundary-pushing collaborations for Opera Queensland. In joining with others and creating spaces for different art forms to shine, opera found new relevance for a diverse range of audiences. From our long-term collaborations with Queensland Symphony Orchestra and QPAC to working with new presenting partners, these partnerships are crucial to build capacity within the arts sector and allow more works to be showcased to the world.

CIRCA

Opera Queensland invited Brisbane based, internationally renowned Circa to co-create *Orpheus & Eurydice*. Over the past twenty years, led by their Artistic Director, Yaron Lifschitz, Circa have precipitated a revolution in the world of contemporary circus by returning the focus to the virtuosity of the performers' bodies. *Orpheus & Eurydice* rejected unnecessary ornamentation to allow the physicality of the performers to speak with a profound emotional clarity. Working with Yaron as director were Libby McDonnell, costume, Alex Berlage, lighting, and Boris Bagattini, video — an extraordinary group of artists whose work is remarkable for the originality of their vision and willingness to challenge assumptions about what live performance can be.

SHAKE & STIR THEATRE CO

Opera Queensland was thrilled to continue the sixth year of collaboration with the Matilda Award winning shake & stir theatre co, renowned for their primary and secondary in-school performance programs. In 2019 more than 6,000 students from 35 schools across the state were immersed in the joy and excitement of opera with the third year of the *Hansel & Gretel* primary schools tour.

OPERA AT JIMBOUR

27 July — Jimbour Station

In July, audiences were delighted as Opera Queensland and Queensland Music Festival presented the spectacular outdoor experience, Opera at Jimbour, as part of the 20th anniversary of the state-wide celebration of music.

A country experience with a classical twist, the event featured favourites carefully selected from iconic opera classics, performed by outstanding Opera Queensland singers and a 40-member strong community chorus. This performance was presented by Queensland Music Festival, Western Downs Regional Council, Opera Queensland, Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University and Russell Pastoral Company.

CREATIVES

Conductor Vanessa Scammell

Director Jason Barry-Smith

Chorus Master Arthur Johnson

CAST

Jason Barry-Smith, Shaun Brown, Sarah Crane, Simon Kim, Xenia Puskarz Thomas, Hayley Sugars

Opera Queensland Toowoomba Chorus
Queensland Youth Orchestra

NICOLE CAR

11 August — Concert Hall QPAC

The remarkable Australian star, Nicole Car was joined by her husband, internationally acclaimed baritone, Etienne Dupuis and Dalby-born pianist, Jayson Gillham. Featuring romantic French and Spanish songs and popular arias and duets, this exclusive one-night only performance was presented in association with QPAC and Andrew McKinnon.



Nicole Car
/ Photo: Georges Antoni

OSCAR & LUCINDA

World premiere — 27 July — Carriageworks

Oscar & Lucinda, a co-production and co-commission with Opera Queensland, Sydney Chamber Opera, and Victorian Opera had its world premiere at Sydney's Carriageworks in July.

Peter Carey's novel about the complex lives and loves of an orphaned proto-feminist industrialist and a man who believes he is touched by God is adored by readers the world over.

The opera reunited the composer Elliott Gyger with librettist Pierce Wilcox. Together they transformed Carey's kaleidoscopic novel into a profoundly original new Australian opera, directed by Opera Queensland Artistic Director, Patrick Nolan.

CREATIVE TEAM

Composer Elliott Gyger

Libretto Pierce Wilcox, based on the novel by Peter Carey

Conductor Jack Symonds

Director Patrick Nolan

Set & Costume Design Anna Tregloan

Lighting Design Damien Cooper

Assistant Director Constantin Costi

All have their moments to shine in Patrick Nolan's inventive, fluid production, rich with memorable images and moments of subtle choreography. Nolan handles the more frenetic moments of activity with ease, the instances of split-stage storytelling done with clarity and facility.

LIMELIGHT MAGAZINE REVIEW
OSCAR & LUCINDA

CAST

Jessica Aszodi, Brenton Spiteri, Jeremy Kleeman,

Simon Lobelson, Mitchell Riley, Jane Sheldon

VERDI'S REQUIEM

27 April — HOTA, Home of the Arts, Gold Coast

One of the signature events of the 2019 Bleach* Festival, the stunning outdoor production of Verdi's *Requiem* was presented in collaboration with the Bleach* Festival, Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University and HOTA. Showcasing local talent, the ambitious project featured over 150 musicians and singers, including site-specific commissions from designer and fire artist Alex Podger, and video and lighting designer Mark Howett.

CREATIVES

Conductor Peter Luff

Director Patrick Nolan

Lighting and Video Design Mark Howett

Site Design Alex Podger

Chorus Master Narelle French

CAST

Natalie Aroyan, Milijana Nikolic, Rosario La Spina, Andrew Collis

Opera Queensland Chorus

Queensland Conservatorium Student Chorus

Queensland Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra



Verdi's *Requiem* as part of Bleach* Festival, HOTA Home of the Arts / Photo: Art-Work Agency



NURTURING AND GROWING AUDIENCES

CONNECTING AND ENGAGING TO ENRICH LIVES THROUGH OPERA

We value the stories and music that four hundred years of opera offer our audiences. This wellspring of inspiration reveals the threads that connect us — our humanity, our fragility and our extraordinary capacity to adapt to change.

2019 saw us lay the foundations for deeper connection and stronger relationships with our opera audiences and wider appreciation of the art form.

INCREASE MAIN STAGE PRESENTATIONS FROM TWO TO THREE PER YEAR

A total of 13,994 audience members enjoyed our three main stage performances — *Tosca*, *Orpheus & Eurydice* and *A Flowering Tree* — this year.

COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO ACCESS NEW AUDIENCES

Opera Queensland experienced increases in attendance amongst younger audiences (ages 25–49), particularly for our collaborations with Circa, Bleach* Festival and Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University.

PRESENT WORK THAT DEVELOPS DIVERSE AUDIENCES

In *Songs to Die For* classical opera shared the stage with rock and roll as Don Giovanni travelled down AC/DC’s “Highway to Hell”. Presented to regional and remote communities across Queensland, this production played in 17 different centres, a significant increase on previous tours.

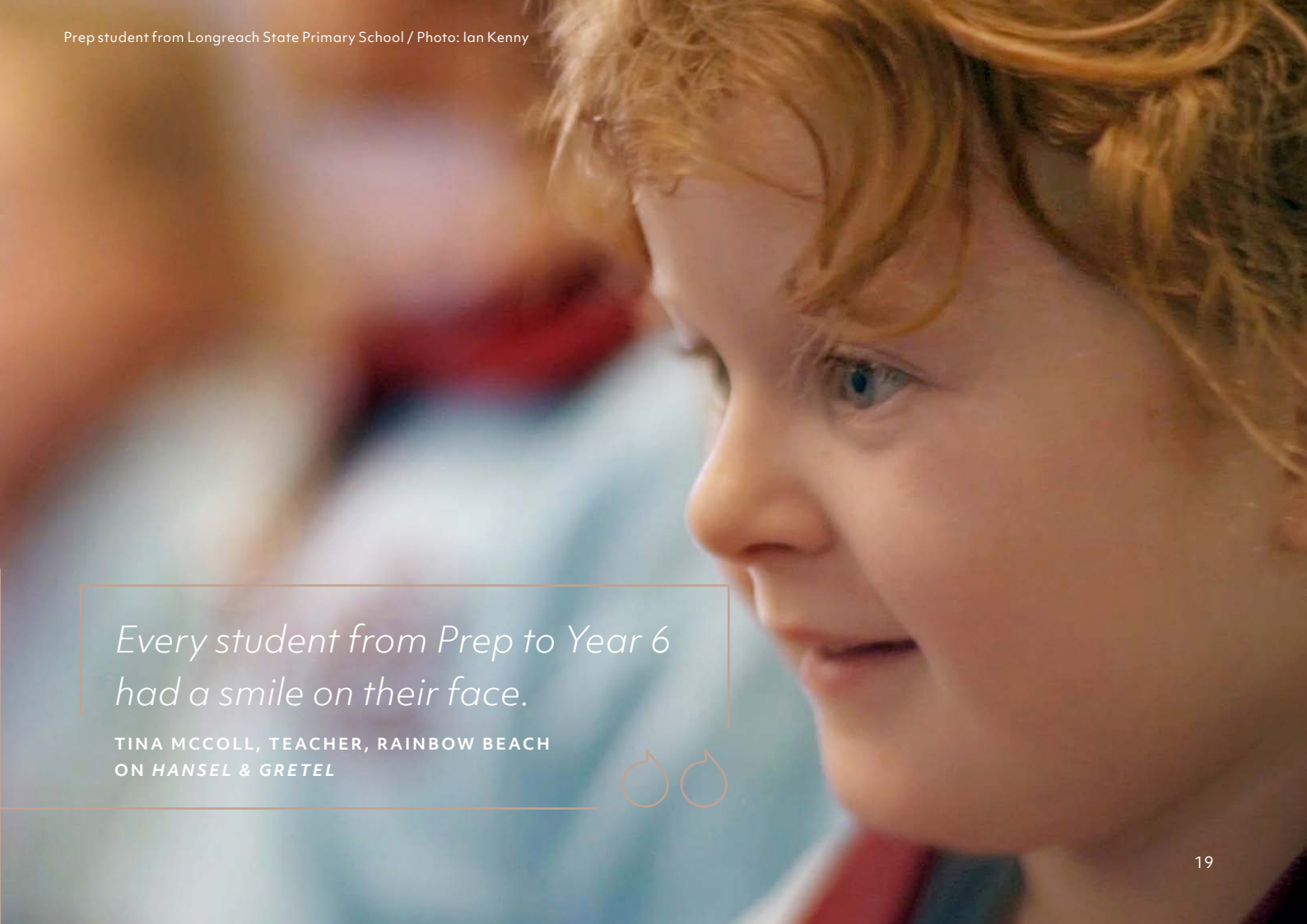
Project AR-ia was a critical step forward in embracing digital technology as a form of creation and a medium for sharing our work more widely.

EXTEND OUR EDUCATION AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Hansel & Gretel brought opera into the hearts and minds of more than 6,000 school students. In 2019 our talented artists presented to children in regional areas recovering from recent drought and floods. This included students from small country schools such as Orion State School, 115km south of Emerald, where the entire school of 11 students delighted in their first opera performance.



Sing Sing Sing participants / Photo: Stephanie Do Rozario



Prep student from Longreach State Primary School / Photo: Ian Kenny

Every student from Prep to Year 6 had a smile on their face.

TINA MCCOLL, TEACHER, RAINBOW BEACH ON *HANSEL & GRETEL*



17%
GROWTH IN SOCIAL
MEDIA AUDIENCE

71%
LOYAL OPERA
LOVERS

94%
LIKELY TO
RECOMMEND *TOSCA*
TO A FRIEND

GIACOMO PUCCINI

TOSCA

13-22 JUNE 2019 — LYRIC THEATRE QPAC

In a world of political tyranny and widespread intolerance, *Tosca* is a timeless plea for artistic and political freedom.

Often described as the greatest opera of them all, *Tosca* embraces the grand themes of the human spirit brought to life by one of the greatest composers of them all, Giacomo Puccini. For this production we transported audiences back to 1970s Italy where political and religious tensions are at breaking point. *Tosca*, a famous opera singer, is devoted to painter Cavaradossi but Scarpia, the tyrannical Chief of Police, has his own plans for her.

Tosca is a gripping tale of lust, betrayal and cold-blooded murder. The new production was directed by Opera Queensland's Artistic Director, Patrick Nolan, conducted by Oliver von Dohnányi, and featured an all-star company headlined by international Australian artists Rachelle Durkin, Angus Wood and José Carbó.

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor Oliver von Dohnányi
Director Patrick Nolan
Sets and Costumes Dale Ferguson
Lighting Mark Howett
Chorus Master Narelle French
Assistant Director Laura Hansford
Fight Director Nigel Poulton

CAST

Tosca Rachelle Durkin
Cavaradossi Angus Wood
Scarpia José Carbó
Spoletta Gregory Massingham
Sciarrone David Hibbard
Angelotti Sam Hartley
Sacristan & Gaoler Shaun Brown
Cleaner (Shepherd) Jessica Low
Opera Queensland Chorus
Children's Chorus
Queensland Symphony Orchestra



NEW PRODUCTION



5,861

ATTENDANCE



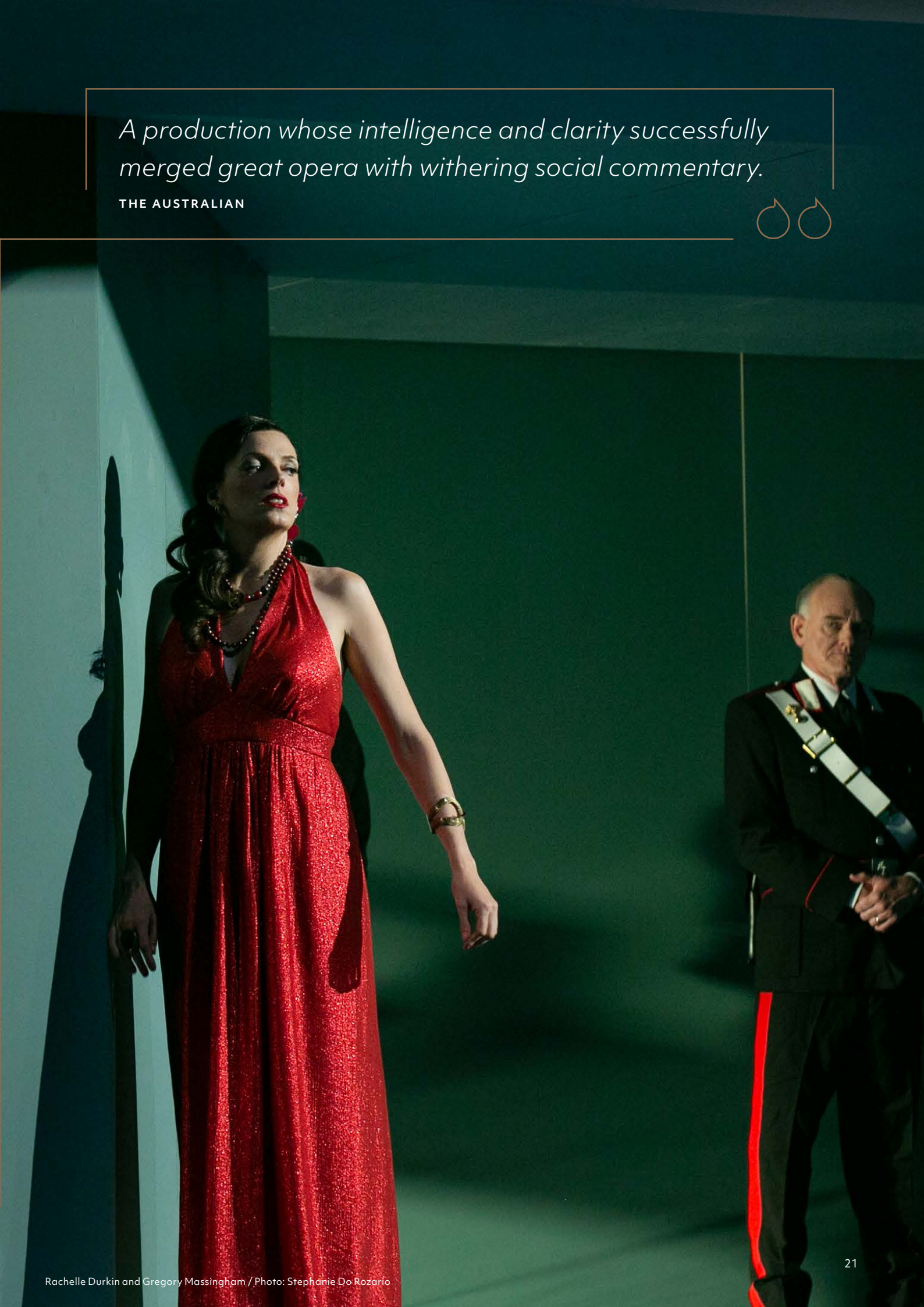
PERFORMANCES



TOSCA IS SET FOR
A REGIONAL TOUR
OF QUEENSLAND

A production whose intelligence and clarity successfully merged great opera with withering social commentary.

THE AUSTRALIAN



Rachelle Durkin and Gregory Massingham / Photo: Stephanie Do Rozario

LEARNING AND EDUCATION

Delivering opera in engaging and innovative ways within schools and communities right across Queensland is an important goal for Opera Queensland. By taking opera off the main stage and into communities, we bring our audiences and artists closer together, breaking down traditional barriers and expanding the appreciation of the art form.

SING WITH OPERA QUEENSLAND

Opera novices and keen amateur singers alike got their chance to sing along to much-loved operatic classics as part of Sing Sing Sing — one of Opera Queensland's most popular events. The joy and fun created in these events continue to remove barriers between opera and the general public, attracting an impressively diverse audience from across the state.

Singers who prefer more formal training once again benefited from Opera Queensland's program of Youth and Adult Workshops. Offering the chance to hone both choral and solo skills, the workshops help develop existing skills and build confidence. Solo workshops were delivered in masterclass mode where each participant was given tailored feedback and tips. Participants elected to focus on either classical or contemporary repertoire and work under the tutelage of Opera Queensland's highly skilled artists. These solo workshops are attended by people who want to re-connect with singing, refine their skills for an upcoming audition and music teachers who are seeking professional development for their own pedagogy.

Continuing the popular format of previous years, a new series of Adult Group Vocal Workshops was introduced in 2019. They were designed to appeal especially to experienced and amateur singers such as choir members and music teachers seeking professional development and the joy of singing ensemble music and choruses in intensive group sessions.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Opera Queensland has been delivering school residency programs each year for over a decade. In these programs, students work with Opera Queensland Teaching Artists and facilitators to unpack the stories of traditional operas and retell them in their own way. Students curate repertoire from various composers and musical styles to create unique performances that reflect the students' own experiences and musical preferences. The program allows senior students to take leadership roles whilst celebrating the diversity across the school cohort. Residencies conclude with a presentation of the week's learnings to friends, family and the school staff.

In 2019, students from Springwood State High School again benefited from this important educational program. The school's P&C Association fundraises annually to make these residency workshops possible and many students attend every year for the six years of their secondary schooling. School workshops were also undertaken by students at Yeronga State High School, providing invaluable access to our highly skilled music education specialists.

FACILITATORS & PRESENTERS

Jason Barry-Smith, Mark Connors, Rebecca Cassidy, Alicia Cush, Bradley Daley, Susan Ellis, Narelle French, Nick Kirkup, David Law, Jessica Low, Catherine Lynagh, Irena Lysiuk, Katie Stenzel, Luke Volker, John Woods.

MUSIC TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2019 Opera Queensland again collaborated with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) on a professional development and education launch. In October more than 200 teachers visited the QSO's ABC Studio to learn more about the educational resources offered by both companies. Teachers then spent the day engaging in professional development delivered by artists and guest presenters across both organisations' workplaces. The annual event is a key component of professional development for music teachers in South East Queensland and allows both companies to share their new programs and explore how they align with the National Curriculum.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Loved by hundreds and thousands of people the world over, *Hansel & Gretel* is one of the most popular operas ever written. In 2019 Opera Queensland again partnered with the renowned shake & stir theatre co to take this bright and beautiful new version, based on Humperdinck's *Hansel & Gretel*, on an extensive schools tour. Performed by a talented cast of Queensland's most energetic young performers and directed by the multi-award winning shake & stir theatre co team, *Hansel & Gretel* was performed to more than 6,000 students in regional and South-East Queensland communities, many affected by natural disasters. This meaningful educational program offers children, who may not otherwise encounter the art form, an unforgettable introduction to opera.

CREATIVE TEAM

Directors Ross Balbuziente, Nelle Lee and Nick Skubij

Set & Costume Designer Josh McIntosh

Musical Adaptation & Lyrics Narelle French

Book and Dialogue shake & stir theatre co

Media Producers optikal bloc

CAST

Hansel Bree Meara-Hendy

Gretel Emma Nightingale

Witch/Father Thomas Chapman

Mother Clarissa Foulcher (on-screen)

Sandman Jessica Low (on-screen)

Dew Fairy Irena Lysiuk (on-screen)



...best performance at
school I've ever seen!

SHARON WILSON, PRINCIPAL,
BIDDESTON STATE SCHOOL



365
SING SING SING
PARTICIPANTS

1,004
WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANTS

6,139
HANSEL & GRETEL
STUDENT ATTENDANCE



ARTISTS

ARTISTS				
Micheal Al Hajji^	Andrew Collis	David Hibbard	Jon Maskell	Jane Sheldon^
Cievash Areadn^	Chris Connelly^	Jonathan Hickey	Gregory Massingham	Daniel Smerdon
Natalie Aroyan^	Sarah Crane	Jessica Hitchcock^	Benjin Maza^	Brenton Spiteri
Jessica Aszodi^	Daniel Dow^	Michael Keen	Bree Meara-Hendy	Katie Stenzel
Jimi Bani^	David Dow^	Rachel Kelly^	Kenneth Moraleda^	Hayley Sugars
Norah Bagiri^	Etienne Dupuis^	Wade Kernot	Emma Nightingale	Jalen Sutcliffe^
Jason Barry-Smith	Rachelle Durkin	Anna Kho^	Milijana Nikolic	Lionel Theunissen
James Bourbon	Adrian Dwyer	Simon Kim^	Emma Pearson	Xenia Puskarz Thomas^
Shaun Brown	Vivien Emsworth^	Louise King^	Natalie Christie Peluso	Daniel Todd^
Leigh Buchanan	Susan Ellis	Nick Kirkup	Rachel Pines	Leon Warnock
Bianca Bulley	Alexandra Flood^	Jeremy Kleeman^	Heru Pinkasova	Megan Washington
Kiara Bulley	Clarissa Foulcher	Eva Kong	Christa Powell^	Kristal West^
Nicole Car^	Talia Garrett-Benson^	Jolanta Kudra^	Alex Raineri	Owen Willetts^
José Carbó	Ruth Ghee^	Rosario La Spina	Mitchell Riley^	Angus Wood^
Ryan Carlson	Jayson Gillham^	Simon Lobelson^	Alanna Ritchie^	
Rebecca Cassidy	Eleanor Greenwood	Jessica Low	Joshua Rivery^	
Thomas Chapman^	Antoinette Halloran	Shannon Luk^	Ayse Sanal^	
Craig Colclough^	Sam Hartley	Irena Lysiuk	Cassandra Seidemann	

CHORUS				
Sean Andrews	Shaeyna Day	Michael Hibbard	Irena Lysiuk	Deirdre Pullen
Stephen Beck	Bernadette Debattista	Brett Holland	Jon Maskell	Katie Rutledge
Juanita Bowden-Marino	Darian Di Stefano-Johns	Kaja Holzheimer	Shelden Mathieson	Michael Sanders
Kathryn Bradbury	Louise Dorsman	Ian Kammholz	Elizabeth McBride	Cassandra Seidemann
Matthew Broadbent	Dominique Fegan	Steven Kickbusch	Bree Meara-Hendy	D'Arne Sleeman
Ryan Carlson	Regan Flor	Adele King	Ron Morris	Daniel Smerdon
Rebecca Cassidy	Clarissa Foulcher	Dana Kingsford	David Muller	Jill Sullivan
Susan Chapman	Anne Fulton	Nick Kirkup	Yvonne Napper	Lionel Theunissen
Thomas Chapman^	Karen Gaydon	Mark Kroon	John Nicholson	Eleanor Varnes
Chris Cobcroft	Melissa Gregory	Andrew Lange	Emma Nightingale	Leon Warnock
Janelle Colquhoun	Rachael Griffin	Jessica Low	Heru Pinkasova	Rosina Waugh
Bill Cronk	Sally Harrison	Annie Lower	Samuel Piper	Bernard Wheaton
Roger Davy	Sam Hartley	Mattias Lower	Phillip Prendergast	Robert Williams

CHILDREN'S CHORUS	
Sebastian Altamirano^	Anthony Diakos-Masters^
Alexander Baird^	Lachlan Jarvis^
Xavier Craddock^	Mac Johnson^
Kavith De Silva^	Mackenzie Martin^
	Loukas Waltisbuhl^

QCGU STUDENT CHORUS	
Joel Berndt^^	James Scott^
Ben Burrows^^	Kristian Scott^^
Austin Carpenter^	Kate Stuart^
Sara Donnelly^^	Sabrina Wall^^
Vikram Goonawardena^^	Nina Wildman^
Jolanta Kudra^^	
Alanah Mayers^	

CONDUCTORS & MUSICAL DIRECTORS	
Jason Barry-Smith	Norah Bagiri^
James Dobinson	Luke Captain^
Narelle French	Christine Evans^
Trevor Jones	Narelle French
Rubina Kimia^	Ruth Ghee^
Dane Lam	Andrée Greenwell^
Peter Luff	Elliott Gyger^
Natalie Murray Beale^	Paul Hodge^
Vanessa Scammell	Trevor Jones
Scott Saunders^	Michelle Law^
Jack Symonds^	John Romeril^
Luke Volker	Scott Saunders^
Oliver von Dohnányi^	Luke Volker
	Megan Washington
	Pierce Wilcox^

MUSIC STAFF	
Mark Connors	Ross Balbuziente
Teresa Desmarchelier	Jason Barry-Smith
Alex Raineri	Angela Chaplin
Jillianne Stoll	Constantin Costi^
Kym Troy	Alicia Cush
John Woods	Jeanette Fabila^
	Heather Fairbairn^
	Laura Hansford

DIRECTORS, DRAMATURGS & CHOREOGRAPHERS	
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Nelle Lee	
Yaron Lifschitz^	
Nadine McDonald-Dowd^	
Patrick Nolan	
Nigel Poulton^	
Nick Skubij	
Darren Yap^	

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Jessica Connell^	Alex Berlage^
Jarred Dewey^	Genevieve Blanchett
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Gerramy Marsden^	Penny Challen
Alice Muntz^	Damien Cooper
Kathryn O'Keeffe^	Dale Ferguson
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Candice Moore	Susan Wheatley
Penny Muller	Nick Williams
Caitlin Nass	Kate Wolyncevic
Kaitlyn Orange	

ORCHESTRAS	
Camerata — Queensland's Chamber Orchestra	
Queensland Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra	
Queensland Symphony Orchestra	
Queensland Youth Orchestra	

LEGEND	
▲	First engagement with Opera Queensland
*	Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU) student performer (volunteer)



Brenton Spiteri and Mitchell Riley in *Oscar & Lucinda* / Photo: Zan Wimberley at Carriageworks

ENSURING FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF OPERA QUEENSLAND

Opera Queensland balances the creation of beautiful, impactful art with financially sustainable operations.

Supported by the strong governance and policy framework of the Board, 2019 was an excellent year that saw Opera Queensland report an operating surplus of \$273,331. With the addition of \$200,000 from dollar-matching grants tied to The Chair's Circle reserves campaign and a significant bequest to fund the development of young and emerging artists, the total surplus for 2019 was \$1,297,349 — a highly successful financial year for Opera Queensland.

DIVERSIFY OUR INCOME BASE

Opera Queensland continues to increase the percentage of private income received as a result of our exceptional relationships with donors, sponsors and corporate partners.

BEST PRACTICE GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Led by Board Chair, Emeritus Professor David Siddle, Opera Queensland's volunteer Board held seven Directors Meetings during 2019, undertaking regular governance effectiveness reviews and overseeing the company's robust risk management systems and controls.

CONTINUALLY FOCUSING ON OPERATING COSTS

Strong control of production costs and continual improvements to efficient practices in administration were also central to our positive financial result.

CREATE AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF RESPECT, EVALUATION AND CONTINUAL LEARNING

In 2019 Opera Queensland raised its commitment to making the company a safe, diverse and positive place to work. This was done through the implementation of a HR sub-committee of the Board and the inclusion of diversity and Health and Safety as standing agenda items in our weekly team and management meetings.

28%
RESERVES
RATIO

44%
PRIVATE SECTOR
CONTRIBUTIONS
INCREASE

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



This message is being written at a most difficult time when a good deal of activity — and certainly cultural and artistic activity — is closing down in Australia and worldwide because of the coronavirus and the spread of COVID-19.

I would like to assure you that Opera Queensland began planning early and has been able to put in place measures to protect the health of its staff, patrons and supporters. Sadly, the staging of *Lorelei* had to be cancelled and it is too early to predict the effects of the pandemic on productions planned for later in the year. Heartful thanks are owed to those generous patrons who have 'donated' their tickets to the company. This will be of enormous help in the difficult times ahead.

However, this Annual Report and message is for 2019. Last year saw the company enter one of the most exciting periods in its 38-year history. 2019 was the first year of our three-year funding uplift. We are pleased to report an operating surplus for 2019 of \$273,331. Having a surplus is one of the most important KPIs in the tripartite funding agreement with Arts Queensland and the Australia Council for the Arts.

We thank the Queensland Government, through Arts Queensland, and the Australian Government, through the Australia Council for the Arts, for providing ongoing core funding for the work of Opera Queensland. We also thank sincerely our generous and committed sponsors and donors. Your crucial support has enabled the company to present our wide range of activities throughout Queensland under the Learning, Regional and Community program.

A point of difference between Opera Queensland and some other Australian opera companies involves the delivery of our art form to regional areas of Queensland. Queensland's decentralisation poses obvious issues. Nevertheless, I am very pleased to say that the company met its regional responsibilities magnificently as well as delivering opera to schools across Queensland and three main stage productions in Brisbane. Thus, the company is sharing opera with audiences that are diverse in terms of age, cultural background and geography.

The company's commitment to advancing the art form means that we must simultaneously honour operatic traditions, commit to the creation of new work that speaks to contemporary society and be alert to the possibility of creative collaborations with other art forms.

Readers of this report will undoubtedly have experienced the result of a wonderful collaboration with Circa to produce *Orpheus & Eurydice*.

Achievement of the company's goals depends on long-term financial sustainability. A significant development in 2019 was the establishment of The Chair's Circle. This involves existing donors pledging additional support across a three-year period. This fund, together with our operating surplus, led to an additional \$200,000 from the Australia Council in 2019 to help build the company's reserves.

Aside from coronavirus there are other significant external events that affect the company. The Major Performing Arts Framework has been replaced by the National Performing Arts Framework. As part of this change, all current MPA Companies were to have applied for funding by 30 June 2020. This deadline has now been moved to 1 October at the earliest. If successful, funding will be awarded on a four-year + four-year basis. Looking to the future, we will be engaged in the development of a new Strategic Plan and in the careful documentation of our achievements. I am also happy to report that the company will in 2020 reintroduce a Young Artist Program.

Good governance underpins all our activities and is essential to the realisation of our goals. The Board is committed to sound governance practices, including a healthy organisational culture based on the highest standards of ethical behaviour, and a respect for diversity and inclusion. I thank my Board colleagues for their commitment and guidance, and the entire Opera Queensland team for their tireless efforts to share opera experiences across Queensland.

Finally, the current pandemic will continue to pose difficulties for all sections of our society. However, if as a community we are sensible, considerate and heed advice, we can minimise the impact of COVID-19 and emerge more quickly with our society's structures and values intact and be able to enjoy again live performances of the art form we all love.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR DAVID SIDDLE
Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE TEAM



I'm incredibly proud to work with such wonderful colleagues, and I admire their excellence, dedication and commitment to what we do.



We celebrate a year of great success and learning, built upon a program that enabled new possibilities and much needed change.

I write this from the confines of my home, a place where I have retreated in response to a pandemic that has stopped the world. The seemingly impossible has happened and we must completely rethink the way we function in order to survive. Out of the trauma and tragedy of this crisis phenomenal creativity and ingenuity is emerging. Refusing to be beaten, people have found ways to connect and share their stories, often through music and song, reminding us of opera's phenomenal ability to communicate across borders and revealing our shared humanity.

Reflecting upon our capacity to adapt to this extraordinary situation, we look back on 2019 with a clearer perspective on our commitment to examining our art form and how we operate as an organisation. It was a year of great success and learning, built upon a program that enabled new possibilities and much needed change.

This tone was set early in the year, with the New Opera Workshop — NOW 2019, a forum we presented with the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. Over three days, some of Australia's leading opera composers, thinkers and producers gathered to make music and discuss what opera is and might be.

Out of this weekend emerged a national conversation about the role of women in opera — how are women represented in the narratives of operas and the production teams that create the performances? The lack of critical perspective in the former and the inequity in the latter precipitated a confronting, robust and fruitful dialogue, demanding change.

Everything we do at Opera Queensland celebrates and interrogates the extraordinary energy that opera creates. One of our goals is to "Lead Change in Opera". To do this we must live it in every facet of our work.

In the productions we present, in our relationships with audiences across the state and artists across the world, in the works we commission and the way we work together as an organisation, we always seek to deepen our understanding and facilitate the growth of the art form.

We saw this in the transformative beauty of *A Flowering Tree*, the passion and intensity of *Tosca*, the energy and brilliance of *Orpheus & Eurydice*, the soaring majesty of Verdi's *Requiem*, the deep originality of *Oscar & Lucinda*, the loving homage of *Songs to Die For*, the playful joy of *Hansel & Gretel*, and the wizardry and wonder of our collaboration with Google.

It requires extraordinary commitment from everyone involved — artists, technicians, creative teams, audiences and the Opera Queensland core staff, who so often go above and beyond to deliver our productions and programs.

The economic and social conditions on the other side of this pandemic will demand a great deal from us all. I have no doubt opera will have much to offer, it is a deeply collaborative art form, creating a space where people with many different skills must listen carefully as they work together. More than ever, this sense of shared responsibility and awareness of what is possible when we work together will be something to nurture and celebrate. We look forward to doing this in a crowded room with you soon.

PATRICK NOLAN
Artistic Director & CEO

2019 was a year of great growth for Opera Queensland, as well as a hugely successful financial year.

As the world's theatres have now closed indefinitely, many performers and musicians are not only without work but are also unable to practise and rehearse in groups. The impact that this global crisis will have on the performing arts and the cultural sector will be felt for many years to come. Yet in these times of uncertainty and isolation people increasingly rely on music, opera, and the broader arts to connect and give a sense of belonging and wellbeing.

The challenge for Opera Queensland as it comes to terms with the impact of the current health and economic crisis is shared by artists and arts organisations throughout the world. Fortunately, Opera Queensland is well placed to endure the months ahead. Visionary leadership, effective management and good governance led by our board of directors, chaired by Emeritus Professor David Siddle, ensured 2019 was an outstanding year for Opera Queensland. The leadership team acknowledges the time, wisdom and guidance provided by our board of directors, and thanks them for fostering an environment in which Opera Queensland management can dream, inspire, and deliver.

As a result of ambitious programming, pursuing exciting opportunities and fostering new collaborations and technological innovation, Opera Queensland was able to extend its engagement to new audiences and achieve a successful financial outcome. It is our pleasure to report that the company has again ended the year in a strong financial position showing an operating surplus of \$273,331.

My congratulations to Patrick Nolan for the first year of inspiring artistic direction of classic, contemporary and future works. It was a year powered by imagination featuring five new productions made exclusively for our company. Throughout 2019 Opera Queensland demonstrated a commitment to showcasing the extraordinary talent and artistry of our singers and creative teams. We are delighted to have collaborated with all of our marvellous performing and presenting partners throughout the year and thank them all for their generosity of spirit in these collaborations.

In 2019 we were incredibly fortunate to receive a significant bequest through the Estate of Lois Schultz and June Wheeler. Their extraordinary gift was endowed to Opera Queensland for the purpose of nurturing and fostering our young and developing artists. The bequest is a key contribution to the company's overall surplus of \$1,297,349 for the year. This legacy will help ensure our future and through their generosity we have commenced the Opera Queensland Young Artist Program using the earnings from this restricted endowment.

We are particularly thankful to the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, the Australian Government, through the Australia Council for the Arts, and Brisbane City Council for their vital support and encouragement. This essential funding from our government partners ensures the employment and professional development of our singers, creatives and arts workers. It enables our artistic vibrancy and our ability to enrich the lives of our diverse audiences throughout Queensland by creating thrilling opera.

We also extend our sincere and heartfelt thanks to our generous donors, Trusts and Foundations, and to all of our corporate partners. We are grateful to our many long-term and new supporters and notably Datacom, who has been a major partner of Opera Queensland for 19 years, for their continued confidence and critical support of the company. These supporters give us strong foundations and allow us to extend the reach of our activities and audiences and make it possible for us to develop new talent, showcase our artists and reveal the beauty of opera to audiences throughout Queensland.

I am incredibly proud to work with wonderful colleagues, and I admire their dedication, commitment to excellence and belief in the power of the art form of opera. As Opera Queensland gears up for its 40th anniversary in 2021 we look forward to bringing the joy and connection of opera to our diverse audiences, albeit in a changed world.

SANDRA WILLIS
Executive Director

OUR DONORS

THE CHAIR'S CIRCLE

Emeritus Prof David Siddle & Emeritus Prof Christa Critchley
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Mrs Mary Gannon & Prof Frank Gannon
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Mr Trevor St Baker AO & Mrs Judith St Baker

LEGACY DONORS

The Estate of Lois Schultz & June Wheeler

AMBASSADORS OF EXCELLENCE

Productions such as *Tristan und Isolde* wouldn't be possible without the support of the Queensland Wagner Society and Dr Mark Walker. We continue to welcome the support of new and existing Ambassadors.

FOUNDATION DONORS \$15,000 AND ABOVE

Mr Philip Bacon AM, Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, Prof Ian Frazer AC† & Mrs Caroline Frazer, Mather Foundation, Emeritus Prof David Siddle & Emeritus Prof Christa Critchley

PLATINUM DONORS \$10,000–\$14,999

Mrs Beverley Smith

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SILVER DONORS \$1,000–\$4,999

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2019 OPERA CLUB

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† The Medical Chapter
§ The Legal Chapter

THANK YOU

The Future of Opera is in Your Hands.

With their visionary support, Opera Queensland's philanthropic community allows the company to reveal the beauty and share the transformative power of opera.

As an industry leader shaping Australia's cultural identity through the development and presentation of outstanding opera productions, Opera Queensland delivers excellence in all that we do while engaging and nurturing new and diverse audiences.

With our vital donors' generous support in 2019, it was possible for us to:

- Increase our number of main stage productions
- Expand our audiences
- Invest in emerging artist development
- Grow our regional engagement

This year our Annual Appeal, with matched funding from the Mather Foundation, focused on raising funds to allow us to reach more Queenslanders across our vast state, from metropolitan to flood and drought-affected areas. Together with the ongoing support of the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, over 16,000 Queenslanders experienced the wonder of opera through our Learning, Regional and Community programs.

Other highlights for 2019 included our highly entertaining annual fundraising gala. We give our thanks to the Opera Queensland Gala Committee members for their passion and dedication to the success of this event and to the individuals and organisations who showed incredible generosity by donating auction prizes.

Additionally, the launch of The Chair's Circle secured new philanthropic income in support of the company's reserves campaign.

We invite you to enrich lives by joining us in sharing the joy of opera.

T: 61 7 3735 3030 | E: development@oq.com.au



L ongreach State Primary School students / Photo: Ian Kenny

92
NEW DONORS

29%
INCREASE IN
DONATIONS
RECEIVED



CREATING PATHWAYS FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS WORKERS

PROMOTING QUEENSLAND CREATIVE TALENT

Opera Queensland continues its commitment to furthering the careers of Queensland artists and arts workers. From singers and set designers to costumiers and wig makers, the company called upon the very best experts and artisans from across the state and beyond — preserving, sharing and developing skills to ensure the longevity of the art form.

In 2019, Artistic Director Patrick Nolan directed the world premiere of *Oscar & Lucinda*, a new Australian opera co-produced and co-commissioned by Opera Queensland, Sydney Chamber Opera and Victorian Opera. The hand-crafted costumes and wigs for the production were made in Opera Queensland's workshop, with 10 wardrobe staff, including two interns, working together to realise the vision of Anna Tregloan's beautiful costume designs.

COMMISSION DIVERSE ARTISTS TO TELL LOCAL STORIES THROUGH OPERA

In 2019 Opera Queensland was involved in the creative developments of four new works. While not every creative development will make it to the stage, even the best ideas need time, space and resources for artists to transform their ideas into productions ready for an audience.

We continued our support of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) artists to tell their stories with *RIOT*, a new work inspired by the true events of the race riots targeting the Chinese community in Brisbane in 1888.

PROVIDE EMERGING ARTISTS WITH PRACTICAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Giving artists and arts workers practical experience is essential to the creation of a strong and sustainable arts industry. Through our Learning, Regional and Community program we engaged Jessica Low and Nick Kirkup, two emerging Queensland singers, and provided them with a variety of performance opportunities, from leading schools workshops in outback Queensland to small roles in our major productions. Our wardrobe also offered numerous opportunities for costumiers and designers to build their skills through internships.

ENGAGE FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS TO CREATE OPERA

In collaboration with QPAC, we invested in the development of *Dancing the Line*, a new Australian musical about a group of Torres Strait Islanders who used song as inspiration to set the world record for laying railway tracks in outback Queensland.

PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS WORKERS

Our self-presented works, collaborations, regional touring, education and community activities employed 265 artists and arts workers in 2019.



ALEXANDRA FLOOD AND ALEX RAINERI

15–16 November 2019 — Opera Queensland Studio

November saw the launch of the company's recital series and the Opera Queensland debut of Alexandra Flood. Flood is one of the rising stars on the Australian and international opera stage, having performed leading roles in some of the most significant opera houses in Germany, Austria, and the USA. Brisbane's own piano wunderkind Alex Raineri took the stage alongside Flood for two sold-out performances, presenting a carefully curated concert of songs by diverse composers including Schubert, Richard Strauss, Debussy and Fauré.



DEBUT
PERFORMANCE

265

TOTAL ARTISTS AND ARTS
WORKERS EMPLOYED

78%

ARTISTS EMPLOYED WHO
ARE RESIDENTS OF QLD

101

ARTISTS ENGAGED FOR
THE FIRST TIME

As the state opera company, it's both an obligation and a true pleasure to develop the careers of Queensland artists, and a joy to bring in great artists from other cities and countries to work alongside Queenslanders. In creating pathways for arts workers to grow and thrive, we ensure the security of opera in Queensland for generations to come.

SANDRA WILLIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JOHN ADAMS

A FLOWERING TREE

2-6 APRIL 2019 — CONCERT HALL QPAC

Kumudha is a young woman with a secret power — the ability to transform herself into a tree covered in valuable blossoms.

But sometimes rare gifts can inspire love and jealousy in equal measure. Exploring themes of magic, transformation and the healing power of deep and selfless love, *A Flowering Tree* is a majestic retelling of a traditional Indian folk tale by world renowned composer John Adams.

The simple humanity of the story created a space for us to reflect upon our own fragility. Inviting us to be open to the vulnerability that love requires, showing us when life, or society, or the environment falls apart, we must be present to the pain, not avoid it or pretend it's not happening.

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor Natalie Murray Beale

Director Patrick Nolan

Video Mic Gruchy

Sets and Costumes Bryan Woltjen

Lighting Jason Glenwright

Sets & Costumes Assistant Rozina Suliman

CAST

Kumudha Eva Kong

Prince Adrian Dwyer

The Storyteller Craig Colclough

Opera Queensland Chorus

Queensland Symphony Orchestra

A Flowering Tree by John Adams with Libretto adapted by John Adams and Peter Sellars from a South Indian folktale and poems translated by A.K.Ramanujan is published by Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd. These performances are licensed by Hal Leonard Australia.



NEW PRODUCTION



2,399

ATTENDANCE



3

PERFORMANCES

5× GRAMMY AWARD
WINNING COMPOSER

This is an evocative and persuasive production of a contemporary opera that is rarely seen in Australia, and a powerfully moving one to boot. If you're at all a fan of opera or modern classical, don't miss it.

LIMELIGHT MAGAZINE



NEW WORKS IN DEVELOPMENT

In our drive to foster creative talent, Opera Queensland is proud to support the development of new Australian works that tell local stories, enable social change and help build strong vibrant communities. In 2019, the creative development of *Songs to Die For* culminated in performances as part of our regional tour and three other new works were showcased at industry viewings.



Darren Yap, *RIOT* Creative Development / Photo: Jade Ferguson

RIOT

Developed with La Boite Theatre Company

RIOT is a sung-through music theatre work inspired by the true events of the race riots targeting the Chinese community in Brisbane in 1888. A tragic love story set against the backdrop of heady 1800s Brisbane, a big country town populated with bustling bars, seedy brothels and “yellow peril”. The creative development for this new work took place over two days, concluding with a preview to industry peers.

This project received financial support from the Australian Government through the Australian Council for the Arts.

CREATIVE TEAM

Composer Paul Hodge

Libretto Michelle Law

Director Darren Yap

Musical Director James Dobinson

DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP CAST AND MUSICIANS

Jason Barry-Smith, Chris Connelly, Vivien Emsworth, Jonathan Hickey, Rachel Kelly, Anna Kho, Louise King, Eva Kong, Irena Lysiuk, Kenneth Moraleda, Christa Powell, Joshua Rivery, Daniel Todd

DANCING THE LINE

Developed with Ailan Traks and QPAC

Drawing on real life, *Dancing the Line* presents a largely unknown story of post-war migration from the Torres Strait to the mainland, by men whose back-breaking labour became integral to the development of Australia's Top End. The musical has grown via community workshops, ongoing consultation with elders, and several stages of script and music development. *Dancing the Line* uses as its dramatic climax the real-life events of 1968, when gangs of Torres Strait Islander railwaymen broke the world record, which still stands today, for laying track on BHP's Port Hedland to Mt Newman line.

CREATIVE TEAM

Artistic Director Luke Captain

Script Norah Bagiri, Luke Captain, Ruth Ghee, John Romeril

Director Nadine McDonald-Dowd

Musical Director Rubina Kimia

Choreography Jeanette Fabila

Co-producers Paul Brown, Tony Ghee, Joanne Pratt, Irene Feuz

Cultural Advisers Tony Ghee, Charles Passi

DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP CAST AND MUSICIANS

Norah Bagiri, Jimi Bani, Daniel Dow, David Dow, Ruth Ghee, Benjin Maza, Jalen Sutcliffe, Kristal West



SONGS TO DIE FOR

Acknowledging death is a mystery that has fascinated composers across time, *Songs to Die For* took a collection of great death scenes from the history of opera and wove them through with songs by some of the greats of rock and roll who died too soon.

Kurt crooned for Mimi, Amy understood La traviata's pain, Janis sneered at Don G, and Jim loved us all madly as we abandoned ourselves to the wonder and intensity of the music.

CREATIVE TEAM

Concept and Direction Patrick Nolan

Co-Musical Directors Trevor Jones*, Scott Saunders

Costume Design Leigh Buchanan

DEVELOPMENT CAST

Jason Barry-Smith, Rebecca Cassidy, Jessica Low

*by arrangement with Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University

THREE MARYS

Developed with QPAC

Three Marys is a poetic story inspired by the medieval legend of biblical figures Mary mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Mary Magdalene's daughter, Sara. It follows the story of the three women as they seek asylum in a new land and set out to make a new life for themselves once accepted by the community.

The project's strong contingent of female artists aligned with Opera Queensland's focus on developing new works that place these voices at the forefront.

Three Marys is diverse in its casting and multilingual — principally in English with translations into French and Arabic, or Aramaic.

CREATIVE TEAM

Composer Andrée Greenwell

Libretto Christine Evans

Workshop Dramaturg Angela Chaplin

Choir Director Alison Rogers

DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP CAST AND MUSICIANS

Micheal Al Hajj, Ciavash Arean, Talia Garrett-Benson, Jolanta Kudra, Heru Pinkasova, Vocal Manoeuvres Academy Youth Ensemble

SONGS TO DIE FOR

For 400 years, death has inspired iconic composers and modern legends alike, with Kurt Cobain, Amy Winehouse and Janis Joplin all writing songs that speak as passionately to us as the music of their operatic counterparts.

A cheeky nod to the over-dramatised deaths of opera's leading characters masterfully entwined with pop classics, *Songs To Die For* saw three of Opera Queensland's leading artists hit the road with two brilliant and versatile musical artists for a 17-date tour of regional and remote venues across the state.

CREATIVE TEAM

Original Concept & Director Patrick Nolan
Co-Musical Directors Trevor Jones* and Scott Saunders
Designer Leigh Buchanan

CAST

Soprano Rebecca Cassidy
Mezzo soprano Jessica Low
Baritone Jason Barry-Smith
Keyboard, percussion, vocals Scott Saunders
Keyboard, vocals Trevor Jones*

Songs To Die For was developed in collaboration with the ensemble.

*by arrangement with Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University



2,088

TOTAL
ATTENDANCE

Brisbane
Bundaberg
Cairns
Caloundra
Charleville
Gladstone
Gold Coast
Ingham
Innisfail
Ipswich
Longreach
Roma
St George
Sunnybank
Townsville
Windorah
Winton

COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

As Australia's most decentralised state, more than half of Queensland's population lives outside Brisbane — a fact that drives Opera Queensland's Learning Regional and Community team.

With generous support from the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, Opera Queensland aims to overcome the tyranny of distance experienced by many people living in regional and remote areas by presenting high quality, live performances. The opportunity for our talented artists to perform at unique community experiences, both regionally and away from the main stage in Brisbane, showcases their skills and broadens the reach of opera in the community.

REGIONAL PERFORMANCES

Opera Queensland artists delighted regional Queensland audiences and guests at performances throughout 2019, including during the *Songs to Die For* tour, reaching from Cairns to Windorah to the Gold Coast, and the spectacular outdoor experience of Opera at Jimbour. Over 800 people picnicked in the glorious surrounds of the Ballandean Estate for Opera in the Vineyard in May and were treated to a special program from husband and wife team Rosario La Spina and Milijana Nikolic. Queensland's iconic weather made for wonderful experiences at Opera in the Vineyard in the Granite Belt and Opera by the Lake in Childers.

UNIQUE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

The company's High Notes program delivered numerous bespoke events during the year. Performances included National Anthems at the opening night of Brisbane's premier French event, Le Festival, and at QPAC's annual Italian National Day celebration. Other performances included the Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust Thank You Breakfast at City Hall and a performance at the Women Chiefs of Enterprises International event.

Opera Queensland helped bring the Christmas spirit to the River City with a performance at the Lord Mayor's Christmas Carols on the Riverstage. A forthcoming partnership with West Village was celebrated with Carols in the Common in December, where residents and the local community were entertained with a program of Christmas favourites and encouraged to sing along at this inaugural event.



Opera Queensland's Mark Taylor at the Qantas Founders Museum, Longreach / Photo: Laura Hansford



(L-R) Trevor Jones, Jason Barry-Smith, Jessica Low, Rebecca Cassidy and Scott Saunders / Photo: Stephanie Do Rozario

PATRON

His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey, AC Governor of Queensland

OPERA QUEENSLAND BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS



EMERITUS PROFESSOR DAVID SIDDLE BA (Hons), PhD, FASSA / CHAIR
Director since September 2014
Appointed Chair October 2018
Deputy Chair August 2016–September 2018
Member, Audit & Risk Committee
Member, HR Committee



KIM CHALLENGOR BComm, BA, CA / DEPUTY CHAIR
Director since 2012
Appointed Deputy Chair October 2018
Treasurer June 2012–May 2018



DAVID GOW BCom (Qld), LLB (Qld), FAICD / TREASURER
Director since April 2018
Appointed Chair, Audit & Risk Committee May 2019



ANNE CROSS AM BSW, MSW, FAICD / DIRECTOR
Director since April 2017
Appointed Chair, HR Committee November 2019
Member of Audit & Risk Committee until February 2020



DANIEL TOBIN BA Visual Arts, DipDramArt (Design) / DIRECTOR
Director since August 2018
Member, HR Committee



WILL FELLOWES BComm GradDipCA GAICD / DIRECTOR
Member of the Audit & Risk Committee since September 2016
Director since July 2019



JUDITH MATHER GradCert (Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies), MBus (HR Management), MBus (Philanthropy and NFP) / DIRECTOR
Director since September 2019
Member, HR Committee



DR COLIN FURNIVAL PhD, FRCS, FRACS, GAICD
Chair, Opera Queensland Foundation
Director since December 2009 (Retired September 2019)



TERESA DYSON LLB (Hons), BA, MTax, MAppFin, GAICD
Treasurer June 2018–May 2019
Chair, Audit and Risk Committee to May 2019
Director since August 2016 (Retired May 2019)

OPERA QUEENSLAND BOARD AND TEAM

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

The Late James Christiansen OAM
Lady Jane Edwards AM
Sir Leo Hielscher AC
Martin Kriewaldt
David Macfarlane OAM
Marilyn Richardson
Dr Nancy Underhill

COMPANY MEMBERS 2019

Clare Cauchi
Kim Challenor
Roger Cragg
Emeritus Prof Christa Critchley
Anne Cross AM
Robert Cumming
Teresa Dyson
Greg Ellis
William Fellowes
Dr Colin Furnival
David Gow
Dr Joan Lawrence AM
Judith Mather
Emeritus Prof David Siddle
Louise Simmons
Daniel Tobin
Dr Mark Walker

OUR TEAM

Artistic Director & CEO	Patrick Nolan
Executive Director	Sandra Willis
Director of Business and Finance	Christine McEwan
Head of Music and Chorus Director	Narelle French
Director of Development	Megan Kair
Director of Learning, Regional and Community	Mark Taylor
Director of Marketing and Sales	Elisha Oatley (Until Dec 2019)
Director of Technical Production	Ian Johnson
Artist and Company Manager	Erica Fryberg
Executive Assistant	Louise Simmons
Development Coordinator	Erin Robinson
Development Coordinator	Amy Griffin
Learning, Regional and Community Coordinator	Monica Collis
Marketing Campaign Coordinator	John Sullivan (Until Oct 2019)
Marketing Campaign Manager	Lauren Kelly (Commenced Oct 2019)
Digital Content Coordinator	Stephanie Do Rozario (Until Sep 2019)
Audience Engagement Coordinator	Louisa Sankey (Until Dec 2019)
Head of Wardrobe	Karen Cochet
Assistant Head of Wardrobe	Bianca Bulley
Production Administrator	Annette Kerwitz
Assistant Accountant	Nida Niaz

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Good governance underpins all our activities and is essential to the realisation of our goals.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR DAVID SIDDLE, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Opera Queensland recognises that effective governance is essential to the realisation of Opera Queensland's purpose, vision and goals.

Opera Queensland also recognises that an effective governance framework encourages and supports the efficient use of the company's resources and requires accountability from every person in the company for the stewardship of those resources. The Board of Opera Queensland accepts that it has ultimate accountability for the company's actions and outcomes, and understands that effective governance requires a healthy organisational culture supported by clear and transparent policies and practices.

In developing our governance practices, Opera Queensland has had regard to applicable legislation and recognised standards. The Board of Opera Queensland is committed to maintaining a documented and transparent governance framework consistent with recommended practices provided within the Australia Council for the Arts' Essential Governance Practices for Arts Organisations. All key governance documents are available on the company's website at <https://oq.com.au/about/governance>

1. LAY SOLID FOUNDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

Opera Queensland has a Board Charter setting out the roles, responsibilities, structure and processes of the Board of Opera Queensland. It is complementary to and consistent with Opera Queensland's Constitution. The Board Charter and the Constitution are published on the company's website.

The Board has approved a formal statement of delegated authority to Executive Management that is reviewed annually by the Board. The development of Opera Queensland's strategy, purpose, vision and values is an iterative process of co-creation between the Board and Executive Management. The Board reviews and monitors the strategic direction of the company, and monitors progress towards achieving relevant goals, key performance indicators and outcomes set out in the strategic and operational plans.

2. STRUCTURE THE BOARD TO ADD VALUE

The Opera Queensland Board comprises seven independent non-executive directors who provide their time and services on a voluntary basis. In addition to formal board meetings, the Board meets with stakeholders and Executive Management. The Board is supported by two standing committees; namely, the Audit and Risk Committee and the HR Committee. Each committee has a charter, which is published on the company's website, and operates with authority delegated by the Board. There is a clear division of responsibility between the role of the Board and the role of management.

The HR Committee assists and advises the Board by providing an objective non-executive review of the remuneration of staff and of all policies relevant to remuneration and HR matters. The role of the Audit and Risk Committee is described in section 5.

Each director is appointed for a three year term and is eligible for re-election by company members at the annual general meeting. The company's constitution provides for maximum tenure, subject to a grandfathering provision.

The Board considers that a diversity of skills, backgrounds, knowledge, experience, ethnicity, gender and geographic backgrounds supports good governance. The Board considers that each of the directors has the following attributes: sufficient time to undertake the responsibilities of the role, integrity, and a preparedness to question and critique. Alongside these attributes the skills matrix sets out the mix of skills and experience that the Board considers necessary or desirable in its directors. This matrix informs decisions on board size, composition, and renewal.

The Board evaluates its own performance annually and assesses professional development needs for both Board and Executive Management.

3. ACT ETHICALLY AND RESPONSIBLY

Opera Queensland has a Code of Conduct approved by the Board. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a requirement for all directors, employees, contractors and collaborators. The Code includes a mechanism for identifying and managing conflicts of interest. There is a process of induction for all new Board members, employees, contractors and collaborators where company policies and processes are explained. The Code of Conduct is published on the company's website.

4. PROMOTE DIVERSITY

Opera Queensland is committed to promoting inclusive practices and understanding. The company has a Diversity Policy that has been approved by the Board and communicated throughout the company. Workplace diversity is an integral part of how we operate and is imperative to our success. The company recognises the need to respect individual differences and strive for a truly inclusive workplace where every person can contribute to the endeavours of the company. Measurable objectives for achieving diversity will be included in the company's strategic plan. The Diversity Policy is published on the company's website.

5. SAFEGUARD INTEGRITY IN ALL FINANCIAL REPORTING

The Audit and Risk Committee is a standing committee of the Board, operating under a charter and delegated authority from the Board. The Committee has oversight of the company's budgets, financial statements, and other financial information provided to government, financial institutions, company members and the community. The Committee also oversees the company's systems of internal control, and the appointment of auditors and the audit process.

Each member of the Committee is financially literate, and the Committee includes a member who is a qualified chartered accountant and auditor.

The company's annual financial statements are audited by an independent external auditor appointed by the Board. The auditor meets annually with the committee independently of management. The auditor's independence, competence and capability is reviewed by the Board. Executive Management provides the auditors and the Board with assurance concerning the maintenance of financial records, compliance with accounting standards, risk management and internal control systems. It also provides assurance that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the company's performance. The auditor is invited to attend the company's annual general meeting.

6. ENGAGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The Board's commitment to good governance is, in part, expressed through the company's ongoing engagement with stakeholders. The company uses a range of formal and informal communication channels to understand the views of stakeholders and to share with them the purpose and work of the company.

The company meets formal reporting requirements under the funding arrangements with the Queensland Government (through Arts Queensland) and the Federal Government (through the Australia Council), and engages through other channels, such as meetings.

Engagement by the Board and management with members, patrons and partners is facilitated through the Annual General Meeting, performances and events, annual report, website, season launch, and communication through print and digital channels.

The company's supporters are acknowledged at company performances and events, and in our print and digital publications.

Opera Queensland plays an important part in Queensland life, and engages with Queenslanders through our performances, school programs, workshops, collaborations, and social media. The company seeks to broaden and deepen community engagement.

7. RECOGNISE AND MANAGE RISK

The Board and Executive Management of Opera Queensland recognise that a sound risk management framework is critical to effective management of the company. An effective risk management system identifies and manages potential risks in a continuous, proactive and systematic way through an integrated application of risk management processes across all facets of our operations by all levels of management.

The Audit and Risk Committee assists the Board with oversight of the risk management framework with the Board holding ultimate responsibility for risk management within the company. The company continues to enhance the risk management framework, informed by a risk appetite statement, and integration of risk management into key processes, including risk-based decisions in strategy and business planning, and the incorporation of a formal process for ongoing review and improvement. Continuing work on the risk management framework is being informed by relevant regulations and the Australian / New Zealand standard AS/NZ ISO 31000:2009 Risk management — Principles and guidelines.

The company has a Risk Management Plan and a Risk Management Register that is reviewed by Executive Management with reports to the Board. An attestation is provided by Executive Management that material risks are being managed effectively. The Risk Register and any risk movement is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at every meeting.

8. REMUNERATE FAIRLY AND RESPONSIBLY

The company's approach to remuneration is framed by the strategic direction and operational demands of the organisation together with high standards of governance.

A number of principles underpin our approach to remuneration — namely:

- Align remuneration to the company's purpose and prudent risk taking;
- Attract and retain capable and committed people;
- Support the execution of the company's strategic plan; and
- Remunerate fairly and consistently.

The Board approves the remuneration of Executive Management following recommendations by the HR Committee. The company has a formal process for employee performance evaluations and remuneration reviews.

Members of the Board are not remunerated.

The Board of Opera Queensland provides oversight of the company's remuneration and performance management frameworks. No member of management makes decisions about their own remuneration.

FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
REVENUE FROM OPERATIONS		
Event Income	1,530,660	2,253,455
Sponsorships & Donations	1,868,034	778,663
Other Income	202,511	167,757
Grant Income		
Queensland government		
Operational grant	3,291,770	2,855,220
Project funding	197,878	368,531
Other grants	100,000	100,000
Opera Conference funding	56,687	55,904
Federal government		
Operational grant	562,391	434,833
Project funding	24,683	-
Opera Conference funding	237,616	233,874
Local government	4,000	30,000
Total revenue from operations	8,076,230	7,278,237
Financial income (interest and dividends received)	6,656	12,657
Revenue from non-operating activities	200,000	-
Total revenue and other income	8,282,886	7,290,894
EXPENDITURE		
Production & Touring	4,475,471	4,669,445
Community Programs & Education	193,072	207,085
Marketing & Business Development	1,136,271	984,369
Infrastructure & Administration	1,180,723	1,220,489
Total expenditure	6,985,537	7,081,388
Net surplus	1,297,349	209,506
Other comprehensive income attributable to members of the company	-	-
Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the company	1,297,349	209,506

The above statements should be read in conjunction with the notes and summary of significant accounting policies. This is an extract from the 2019 audited Financial Statements. The full version of the Financial Statements can be found on the Opera Queensland website.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,322,025	723,011
Trade receivables and other assets	530,857	373,171
Total Current Assets	1,852,882	1,096,182
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	781,923	650,738
Other investments	200,000	-
Total Non-Current Assets	981,923	650,738
Total assets	2,834,805	1,746,920
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	117,895	228,560
Employee benefits	145,538	114,948
Other	488,385	745,002
Total Current Liabilities	751,818	1,088,510
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Employee benefits	29,497	-
Other	96,218	-
Total Current Liabilities	125,715	-
Total liabilities	877,533	1,088,510
Net assets	1,957,272	658,410
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
Subordinated loan	200,000	200,000
Donation and Endowment Reserve	824,018	-
Restricted Reserve	400,000	-
Accumulated surplus	533,254	458,410
Total accumulated funds	1,957,272	658,410

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash receipts from customers and grantors	7,667,182	7,196,993
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	(6,815,203)	(6,661,892)
Interest Received	16,281	12,657
Net cash from operating activities	868,260	547,758
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Contributions to Reserve Incentive Scheme	(200,000)	-
Acquisition of plant and equipment	(33,312)	(21,282)
Net cash used in investing activities	(233,312)	(21,282)
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Payment of lease liabilities	(35,934)	-
Net cash used in financing activities	(35,934)	-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	599,014	526,476
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 st January	723,011	196,535
Cash and cash equivalents at 31st December	1,322,025	723,011

The above statements should be read in conjunction with the notes and summary of significant accounting policies. This is an extract from the 2019 audited Financial Statements. The full version of the Financial Statements can be found on the Opera Queensland website.

ENRICHING LIVES WITH EXCEPTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

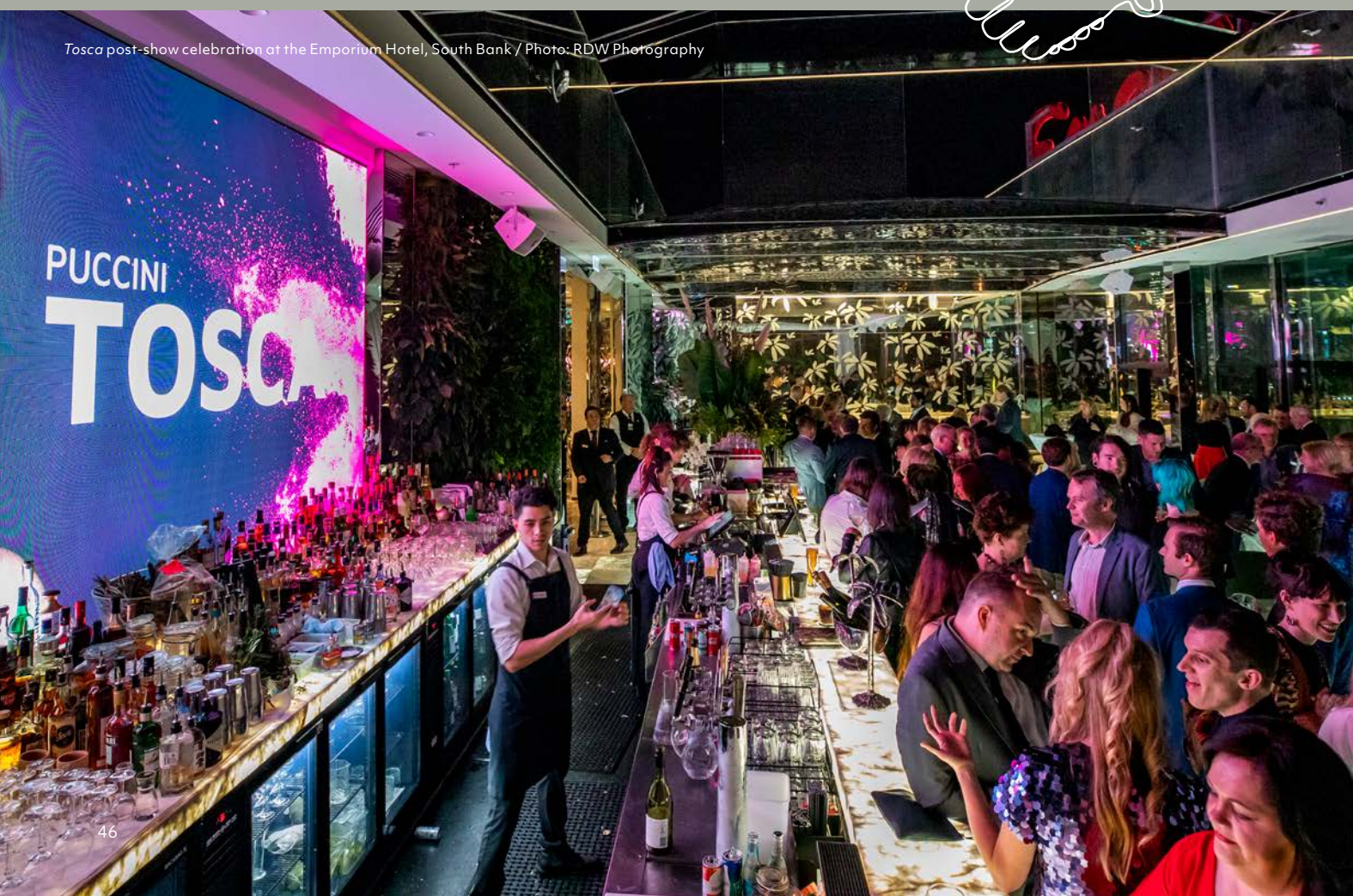
At the heart of all our strategic partnerships is our shared vision to deliver meaningful experiences that inspire with world class performances, connecting people through the power of opera.

Opera Queensland continues to build valuable relationships with an important group of cultural and industry partners. These partnerships enable our mutual aspirations to present exciting works of scale, create new interpretations of the art form and connect with audiences in new and compelling ways.

Our partnerships with Griffith University, Scenic and Brisbane Airport Corporation took opera from the theatre into unique performance spaces to connect with new networks and communities across Queensland who would not normally experience this art form. Partnerships like these contribute to our ability to grow new audiences.

Our venue and hospitality partners across the South Bank precinct and throughout Brisbane enabled Opera Queensland to expand our important suite of strategic engagement events. We also thank and acknowledge a significant group of corporate partners who provide professional expertise. This in-kind support delivers technical, IT, auditing and legal services that are vital to the operations of the company.

Tosca post-show celebration at the Emporium Hotel, South Bank / Photo: RDW Photography



Thank you to our generous partners for supporting our quest for artistic excellence.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

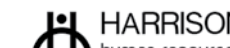
PHILANTHROPY PARTNERS



MAJOR PARTNERS



SUPPORTING PARTNERS



PERFORMING PARTNERS





Opera Queensland Ltd

ABN 83 010 258 750

Queensland Conservatorium Building

140 Grey Street, South Bank

PO Box 5792 West End Qld 4101

T 61 7 3735 3030

E info@oq.com.au

oq.com.au