


THE SOPRANOS

29 March – 2 April, 2022, Concert Hall, QPAC

The performance lasts approximately 2.5 hours including one 20 minute interval.



Opera Queensland respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Lands across Queensland and pays respect to their ancestors who came before them and to Elders past, present and emerging.



THE SOPRANOS

WELCOME

Welcome to *The Sopranos*, the first show of our 2022 Season, a production that has in some ways been in the making for the past four hundred years.

As a company, we aim to create work that is alive to the energy and passions of our audiences, that does not shy away from difficult or challenging ideas, and that listens carefully to our community.

In the past few years the conversation about women in opera – both the way they are represented within its stories, and the opportunities women are given to shape how these stories are told – has intensified, resonating with the greater conversation about our society's respect for women and the inequities they confront on a daily basis.

The Sopranos is a response to these important questions, a first step in exploring the rich and complex history of women in opera, and women's role in opera's future. We were deliberately ambitious in our aims, wanting to cover works from some of the earliest composers like Monteverdi and Purcell through to Australian works written in the last few years by female composers such as Mary Finsterer and Peggy Polias. We felt such scope was necessary to begin to interrogate and celebrate the complexity of women's contribution to the art form.

In developing this production, Sarah Holland-Batt, working with Jane Sheldon as dramaturg, has created a work that offers us a vast emotional, political and intellectual landscape. In the first half, we encounter women who are forced into untenable situations because of their gender. In the second half, trauma is still present, but this time women refuse to behave as they "should".

From the exhilarating highs of *Turandot* and the *Queen of the Night*, to the despair of Mary Finsterer's *Biographica*, *The Sopranos* invites us to look and listen to these characters and the questions they ask from a new perspective, hopefully leading to deeper and more nuanced relationship with them.

To create a production of this scale, written by a woman, containing works by Australian women composers and almost wholly led by women – Jessica Gethin, Laura Hansford, Marg Horwell, Karen Cochet, Bianca Bulley, and Christine Felmingham – with a cast containing ten of Australia's leading sopranos, is a thrilling way to launch our 2022 Season.

There is one person I particularly want to acknowledge. As Opera Queensland's Head of Music Narelle French, has given her extraordinary knowledge and understanding of the art form to innumerable conductors, singers and creative teams over many years. The work of this company and the audiences we have played to across the state have benefited in immeasurable ways because of Narelle's generosity. In a production exploring women's contribution to opera, we celebrate Narelle.

Thank you to our government funding partners, the Australia Council and Arts Queensland and our key presenting partners QPAC and the QSO. We are particularly grateful to Arts Queensland for their support of *The Sopranos* and the regional tour it is undertaking to twelve different centres in the coming months.

Thanks also to our sponsors and patrons, whose generosity enables us to grow as a company, continuing to develop new works like *The Sopranos*. And to our audiences, your commitment and care for what we create is a constant source of inspiration.



**CEO & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
PATRICK NOLAN**



CO DIRECTOR
LAURA HANSFORD



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The words of Roshani Chokshi have been in the front of my mind throughout the creation of *The Sopranos*, "It is better, perhaps, to be thought of as a fiction than to be discarded from memory completely."

I have wondered if this is true. I have wondered, if we were to reach back in time to question the real women that our beloved operatic sopranos were based on, if they would consider living eternal as a fictional character, worthy of being forgotten as flesh and blood. After watching our sopranos live a thousand lives on the stage and die a thousand deaths, it is easy I think, to slip into the habit of *knowing* them and forget to *remember* them. Easy I think, to forget that these women lived a true life, one sinuous and scorching thread of energy, of being, that became the story we thought was worthy of keeping alive.

I wondered how very tiring it must be to sing the same song every night, asking for change,

recognition, or deliverance and to always end up with the exact same conclusion. Continuing in this way there is no rest for the weary, or the dying, or the dead. No rest for Tosca, or Carmen, Octavia or Lucia, doomed to relive their moments of crisis each night as the curtain falls, stuck forever as fiction. But by beginning to peel away at the layers of these characters, cracking through the hardened crust of lacquered fiction, painted on over hundreds of years, we begin to reveal the real woman that lies underneath.

The Sopranos has been a chance to be more than just witness to their moments of triumph or despair, it has been a chance to interrogate the difference between sympathy and empathy.

It is only right that we are taken on this journey with some of Australia's leading sopranos, fearless performers who tell the stories of women past present and future, wearing their skin and giving them voice.

Forget what you know about these characters and get ready to meet these women.

Vissi d'arte

Tosca

Giacomo Puccini

Disprezzata Regina

L'incoronazione di Poppea

Claudio Monteverdi

ACT 1

In anno domini

Biographica

Mary Finsterer

Text by Tom Wright

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O giusto cielo ... Il dolce suono

Lucia di Lammermoor

Gaetano Donizetti

Thy hand, Belinda ... When I am laid in earth

Dido and Aeneas

Henry Purcell

On drooping wings

Dido and Aeneas

Henry Purcell

Please don't die, Jan

Breaking the Waves

Missy Mazzoli

Text by Royce Vavrek

Published by G. Schirmer Inc.

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My sleep is fragile like an eggshell is

Sappho

Peggy Glanville-Hicks

Libretto by Lawrence Durrell

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Abscheulicher

Fidelio

Ludwig van Beethoven

Salve Regina

Les dialogues des Carmélites

Francis Poulenc

Rouart Cie Sarl

Administered by: Universal Music Publishing Pty Ltd

FORD—

L'ho trovato,

L'ho trovato, non più moglie!

—ACT II., Scene 2

Dawn

Commute

Peggy Polias

Près des remparts de Séville

Carmen

Georges Bizet

ACT 2

Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix

Samson et Dalila

Camille Saint-Saëns

Mouth – see it

Written on Skin

George Benjamin

Text Author Martin Crimp

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In questa reggia

Turandot

Giacomo Puccini

Patrie infortunée

Iphigénie en Tauride

Christoph Willibald Gluck

Deh, perdona

Nabucco

Giuseppe Verdi

Der Hölle Rache

Die Zauberflöte

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Act 3 final scene

Eugene Onegin

Peter Tchaikovsky

Translated by David Lloyd-Jones

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Humming Chorus

Madama Butterfly

Giacomo Puccini

FORD— I have found him out,
Falstaff is there with my wife.

STAFF CONCEALED IN THE BUCK-BASKET IN FORD'S HOUSE

ARTIST SIGNOR ETTORE TITO

SARAH HOLLAND-BATT

ON *THE SOPRANOS*

If opera's women could speak to one another, what would we hear in that conversation? This question sparked *The Sopranos*, which draws together female characters across the history of opera, and invites us to listen to the echoes between their stories and voices.

The representation of women in opera is complex. It's true they're often subjected to terrible fates. They're murdered, raped, exiled, and martyred. They sacrifice themselves. They go mad. When they disobey, they pay with their lives. And, as Catherine Clément says, the beauty of operatic music can seduce us into almost willing its heroines to their deaths.

But opera's also all about women's power: the supernatural power of the female voice; the exquisite interpretations of female performers; the virtuosity and charisma of divas – and

the threat a single woman can pose to the social order when she refuses to behave.

I carried these tensions and paradoxes with me when writing *The Sopranos*. I was drawn to explore how operatic heroines still find a way to express their free will and agency, even when trapped in desperate circumstances. But I also didn't want to shy away from confronting the trauma female characters experience either. Many characters in *The Sopranos* – including the empress Claudia Octavia, Lucia, the Carmelite nuns, and Cardano's mother – are based on historical figures, and the violence which was visited upon them in their lifetimes is as real as it is harrowing.

History, inevitably, comes to us in fragments. But while fragments inscribe loss, they also invite invention. One liberty I've taken is to try to imagine what these women

would have made of each other's lives and deaths. This Greek chorus of murmuring voices suggests a communal haunting, and a collective memory of all the women living and dying on stage.

The repertoire in *The Sopranos* spans from early operas by Monteverdi and Purcell to works by living female composers Missy Mazzoli, Mary Finsterer and Peggy Polias, which bring us into contact with opera's future and continuing evolution. As we move through these profound and moving works, we find mothers and renegades, poets and artists, outsiders and queens. In this shifting landscape of mourning and strength, rebellion and rage, there's one constant: the singular, unearthly sound of the female voice.

WRITER AND CONCEPT CREATOR
SARAH HOLLAND-BATT



Aeneas tells Dido the misfortunes of the Trojan city. 1815
PIERRE-NARCISSE GUÉRIN





CONDUCTOR
JESSICA GETHIN



Stage set for the Queen of the Night (in Mozart's Magic Flute). 1815
KARL FRIEDRICH SCHINKEL

CONDUCTOR'S NOTE

Music in opera is fundamental in carrying us through this incredibly powerful and vivid art form of storytelling. The musical score – with its unparalleled exploration of harmony, character, setting and emotion – invites us to feel the deepest human emotions, such as love, despair, fear and joy, resilience, sacrifice, bravery and hope.

Typically, operas develop these themes from a singular composer's musical perspective over a few hours. However, *The Sopranos* draws on some of the most powerful moments taken from nineteen different operas, with the repertoire spanning 377 years and five languages. The palette of sound is expansive and eclectic, ranging from incredibly rich, lush and dramatic scoring to minimal orchestration showing fragility in colour and form. This diversity is matched by the extraordinary range of distinct vocal types and timbres we hear across the ten soloist sopranos in the show. Conducting a production which moves between so many genres and styles has required

much sensitivity to each score. Within this interwoven tapestry of sound, I hope we have captured the incredible vulnerability and strength of the women portrayed throughout opera's history.

It has been an absolute privilege to work alongside this extraordinary cast to breathe life into this important production. What they have each brought to the score both vocally and creatively has been fiercely rewarding from a musical perspective. Special thanks to the insightful creative team, Sarah, Patrick and Laura, for having the vision to tell such an important narrative with care and commitment, and to the musicians from the Queensland Symphony Orchestra for their stellar artistic collaboration.

I've always believed opera can help us to better understand the world around us, and I hope that this season of *The Sopranos* provides a space for contemplating the complex roles that women have played through the history of opera – and looking towards their place in its future, too, wearing their skin and giving them voice.

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Concept

SARAH HOLLAND-BATT &
PATRICK NOLAN

Written by

SARAH HOLLAND-BATT

Conductor

JESSICA GETHIN

Director

LAURA HANSFORD &
PATRICK NOLAN

Concept Designer

MARG HORWELL

Costumes

KAREN COCHET &
BIANCA BULLEY

Lighting

CHRISTINE FELMINGHAM

Dramaturg

JANE SHELDON

Chorus Master

NARELLE FRENCH

Cast

SARAH CRANE

AMBER EVANS

TANIA FERRIS

ELEANOR GREENWOOD

LISA HARPER-BROWN

LEANNE KENNEALLY

EVA KONG

KATIE STENZEL

HAYLEY SUGARS

SOFIA TRONCOSO

JOSÉ CARBÓ

MICHAEL HONEYMAN

SIMON LOBELSON

CARLOS E. BÁRCENAS RAMÍREZ

Narrator

NICOLETTA BIANCA

AMY LEHPAMER

BARBARA LOWING

MEGAN WASHINGTON

OPERA QUEENSLAND CHORUS

QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA



Writer & Concept
SARAH HOLLAND-BATT

Sarah Holland-Batt is an award-winning Australian writer, editor and critic, and a Professor of Creative Writing at QUT. Born in Australia and raised between Queensland and Denver, Colorado, she studied literature and writing at the University of Queensland and at New York University, where she was the W.G. Walker Memorial Fulbright Scholar. She is the author of three books of poems—*Aria* (2008), *The Hazards* (2016) and *The Jaguar* (2022)—and a book of essays, *Fishing for Lightning* (2021), collecting her columns on contemporary poetry for *The Australian*. Her writing has

been recognised with numerous prizes, and she is the recipient of a Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship, residencies at Yaddo and MacDowell in the United States, an Asialink Literature Residency in Japan, and an Australia Council Literature Residency at the B.R. Whiting Studio in Rome, among other honours. In 2016, she was awarded the Prime Minister's Literary Award for Poetry.



Conductor
JESSICA GETHIN

Hailed as 'exuberant' and a 'force to be reckoned with', acclaimed Australian conductor Jessica Gethin has been praised by audiences and critics alike for her stellar musicianship, vibrant energy and charismatic stage presence. Moving seamlessly between core symphonic repertoire to opera, ballet, film and contemporary, Jessica's international roster includes guest conducting engagements throughout the United States, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, with collaborations including the Dallas Opera, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Perth Symphony, Canberra Symphony Orchestra,

Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonic and Macao Orchestra as well as regular seasons with the West Australian Ballet.

Since receiving an inaugural Fellowship at the Hart Institute of Women Conductors with the Dallas Opera in 2015 – Jessica has been listed in *Limelight Australia's* Top 20 Australian Artists and *Australian Financial Review's* 100 Most Influential Women, won the Brian Stacey Emerging Australian Conductor Award, received a Churchill Fellowship and was a finalist in the West Australian of the Year Awards. Jessica's dedication to champion new music along with a natural flair for communicating with audiences and a commitment to foster the next generation of emerging conductors has contributed to her rapidly growing profile as a leader in the arts both on and off the podium.



Director
LAURA HANSFORD

Laura has worked on Opera Queensland productions for the last decade as both an artistic and technical collaborator. Most recently, Laura directed OQ's touring production *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, and was Associate Director on Circa's *Italian Baroque* presented with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra at Sydney Festival 2022.

In 2021/2022 Laura was a resident Director with Circa and was the Project Lead on their inclusive Circus program Circability. Laura has acted as Assistant Director on a variety of productions - for Opera

Queensland: *The Marriage of Figaro* (2021), *Tosca* (2019), *Songs to Die For* (2019); and for Victorian Opera: *The Barber of Seville* (2019), *Pelléas and Mélisande* (2018).

Laura has worked extensively with companies such as Opera Australia, Victorian Opera, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, New Zealand Opera and State Opera South Australia. In 2020 Laura was nominated as an Emerging Female Artist at the Matilda awards.



Director & Concept
PATRICK NOLAN

Currently the CEO & Artistic Director of Opera Queensland, Patrick has created productions for Opera Australia, WA Opera, Sydney Chamber Opera, New Zealand Opera, Seattle Opera, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir St, Griffin Theatre, Melbourne Theatre Company, London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games and all the major Australian capital city festivals.

From 2009–2014 he was Artistic Director of Legs On The Wall, creating works that toured Australia, UK, Korea and Brazil. In 2015, Patrick was awarded

an Australia Council Fellowship to support research into large scale outdoor performance and the relationship between extreme physicality and storytelling.

Operas include: *Oscar and Lucinda* Opera Queensland with Sydney Chamber Opera and Victorian Opera; *Tosca*, *A Flowering Tree* and *The Marriage of Figaro* Opera Queensland; *Verdi Requiem* Opera Queensland with Bleach Festival; *Katya Kabanova* Seattle Opera and NZ Opera; *Notes from Underground* Sydney Chamber Opera; *A Flowering Tree* Perth Festival and WA Opera; *Acis and Galatea*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* Opera Australia; *La bohème*, *Eugene Onegin* New Zealand Opera; the world première of *Love in the Age of Therapy* by Paul Grabowsky and Joanna Murray-Smith for the Sydney and Melbourne Festivals.



Concept Designer
MARG HORWELL

Marg has designed for *The Truth, Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes, The House of Bernarda Alba, Lilith the Jungle Girl* (with Sisters Grimm), *Birdland, I Call My Brothers, Peddling, Cock, Constellations, Marlin* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *The Picture of Dorian Gray, How to Rule the World, Lord of the Flies, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Sydney Theatre Company); *Because the Night, Melancholia, Bliss, Caravan, Blasted, Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again, The Testament of Mary, The Real and Imagined History of the Elephant Man, I Am a Miracle, The Good Person of Szechuan, The Homosexuals or 'Faggots'* (Malthouse Theatre); *Salome*

(English National Opera); *Avalanche* (The Barbican); *Unsere Kleine Stadt* (Theater Basel); *Anthem* (Performing Lines); *Lorelei* (Victorian Opera and Opera Queensland); *Leviathan* (Circa); *Shit, Love, Big Heart, Savages* (Dee & Cornelius); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera Queensland).

Marg's awards include 2005, 2007, 2009, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2019 Greenroom Awards, and 2013 Sydney Theatre Awards



Costumes
KAREN COCHET

Trained in fashion, Karen owned innovative clothing business "Salon Dada". In 1989, Karen relocated to Europe and worked for Opéra de Lausanne and Grand Théâtre de Genève from 1994 to 2006. Originally as a cutter costume maker and later as Artistic Liaison, she expanded her knowledge and love of costume working alongside the most talented and respected costumiers and artisans in Europe.

A career highlight was, *La Fête des Vignerons* in 1999, where Karen was responsible for the realisation of over 6,000 costumes, spanning all periods from 15th century

to contemporary times. She worked with Christian Lacroix, Couturier, commissioned to design the costumes for the goddesses.

Resident costume designer for Ballet Romand in Vevey from 2003 to 2008, Karen realised the costumes for *The Nutcracker, Cinderella* and *Peter Pan*, to name a few. Her final project in Switzerland was "Calvin, Genève en Flammes", celebrating the 500th anniversary of Jean Calvin in Geneva.

Karen was appointed Head of Wardrobe at Opera Queensland in 2013. Design credits for Opera Queensland include *The Adventures of Figaro, A Night with Opera Queensland, Snow White* (nominated for Best Costume Design, Matilda Awards, 2016) and *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Costumes
 BIANCA BULLEY

Bianca is a costume designer, cutter and maker for live performance and film. Graduating with Honours from a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion Design, she has worked for multiple independent Australian fashion designers as well as extensively within the costume industry. Her work as a costume designer and maker expands across multiple Queensland major performing arts companies such as Queensland Theatre, Queensland Ballet and most recently full time as the Assistant Head of Wardrobe at Opera Queensland.

In 2020 Bianca designed Opera Queensland's schools season of *The Frog Prince* and *La Bohème*. She has also worked on multiple films such as *Pirates of the Caribbean* as well as Baz Luhrmann's upcoming *Elvis* film where she worked on Elvis's tailored suits. In 2019 Bianca won the Churchill Scholarship and is currently undertaking training to further her skill as a costume tailor.

Bianca is a Co-Manager of fashion not-for-profit The Stitchery Collective, a group of fashion practitioners who create immersive fashion events and workshops for Queensland art galleries and museums. As well as this, Bianca co-runs fashion label Bulley Bulley with her sister Kiara, where they design clothing that combines the concepts of historical costuming with the frivolity and fun nature of contemporary fashion.



Lighting
 CHRISTINE FELMINGHAM

Christine is a Queensland based creative who has worked as a lighting designer for the past decade. In 2019 she was presented with the inaugural Emerging Female Leader Award at the Matilda Awards Ceremony, and has Bachelor degrees in Technical Production and Drama from QUT.

Recent credits include *Ishmael* (Dead Puppet Society); *Caesar* (La Boite Theatre Company); *Rising* (Playlab); *Boyle & Waters in LEOTARD* (Debase Productions); *Dirty Laundry* (The Good Room); *Conviction*, *Elektra*/

Orestes, *The Bull*, *The Moon and The Coronet of Stars* (Hive Collective); *Rovers* (Belloo Creative); and *Sound of a Finished Kiss* (Now Look Here Theatre Company).

Christine also spent much of her time working as the lighting designer and production/ technical manager for Counterpilot, the award-winning collective of transmedia performance artists responsible for IMB: Institute of Light; Avoidable Perils; Truthmachine; Statum; Crunch Time; and Spectate.



Dramaturg
JANE SHELDON

Jane Sheldon is a soprano and composer who specialises in the creation and performance of exploratory chamber music. Praised by the New York Times for singing “sublimely”, the Sydney Morning Herald for “a brilliant tour de force”, and The Washington Post for “a stunning performance”, Jane has established an international reputation for highly specialised contemporary opera and art music for voice.

Jane’s career has included performances with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera (AUS), Sound Icon (USA), Ekmeles (USA), Talea Ensemble (USA), the Australian String Quartet, and Sydney Chamber Opera (AUS), where she is an Artistic Associate. She has worked extensively with composers as they create new works for voice and has performed at international arts festivals such as the Sydney Festival, Jerusalem Sacred Music Festival, Lincoln Center Festival, and Tokyo Festival. Described as “riveting” (New York Times), Jane’s compositions focus on the body in altered or transformative states.



RACHELLE DURKIN as Floria Tosca in
Opera Queensland’s *Tosca*, 2019



SARAH CRANE

Brisbane soprano Sarah Crane has worked extensively in Europe with engagements at Cologne Opera, Opéra National du Rhin-Strasbourg, Basel Opera and Freiburg Opera as well as Opera Australia, Opera Queensland, Opera Victoria and South Australian Opera. Operatic repertoire includes *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Ariodante*, *Der Vampyr*, *Fidelio*, *Marcello's Arianna*, *Carmen*, *Hyperion*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *The Merry Widow*, *The Love of the Nightingale*, *Rusalka*, *Alcina*, *Werther*, *Orlando* and *The Perfect American*. Concert engagements include Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah* for The Hong Kong

Philharmonic Orchestra, Martin's *Maria-Triptychon* as well as the *Stabat Mater* by Szymanowski with the Philharmonic Orchestra Freiburg.

Sarah is a Vocal Lecturer at The University of Queensland. Recent performances include Mozart *Airborne*, Opera at Jimbour, Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, "How Strange the Change" as part of The Brisbane Music Festival, and "A Poet's Love" – a recital in collaboration with Brisbane Music Festival and Opera Queensland. Upcoming engagements include the Mendelssohn-Hensel Oratorio and Mendelssohn's Psalm 42 with The Brisbane Chorale.



AMBER EVANS

Amber Evans is an Australian vocalist, conductor and composer. She regularly performs as an early music soloist, chamber ensemble vocalist, and contemporary opera/vocal specialist, with consistent touring engagements in Australia, the US and the UK.

Winner of the inaugural US Dwight and Ursula Mamlok Advancement Award for the interpretation of contemporary music, she is committed to the vital artistic collaboration with composers to thoughtfully contribute to the musical canon of the present day. An exponent of the capabilities of the "extra-normal" voice, Ms Evans has premiered over fifty specialised vocal works, engaging

audiences with ever-changing insights into the paramount role of the voice in the evolution of art-making.

Since returning to her hometown in Brisbane, Amber is the newly appointed inaugural lecturer for aural studies at the Young Conservatorium, has stepped in as assistant conductor for The Australian Voices, established the vocal sextet Formant, and continues to engage in ongoing online projects with composers and artists in the US and the UK.



TANIA FERRIS

In Australia, Tania has spent the past 18 years as a principal artist, working with Opera Australia, Victorian Opera, Melbourne Opera and West Australian Opera. Internationally she has performed in Tokyo, Osaka, London, New York, and Bulgaria. In 2019 she performed in concert with Bryn Terfel on the Bravo Cruise of Performing Arts.

A true dramatic mezzo-soprano, Tania's repertoire spans over opera, operetta, concert works and Lieder. Her operatic roles include First Norn (*Götterdämmerung*), Carmen (*Carmen*), Third Lady (*The Magic Flute*), Clairon (*Capriccio*), Cornelia (*Giulio Cesare*), Marguerite (*La damnation de Faust*), Flora (*La Traviata*), Enrichetta di Franca (*I puritani*), Fricka (*Die Walküre*).

Her major concert work includes Beethoven *Ninth Symphony*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Rachmaninoff's *Vespers*, Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* and *Kindertotenlieder*, Elgar's *Sea Pictures*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Mozart's *Missa Brevis*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Bach's *Magnificat*.



ELEANOR GREENWOOD

Eleanor Greenwood is a graduate of London's Royal Academy of Music Opera School and Australian National University School of Music, and first prize winner of the McDonald's Operatic Aria. She made her professional debut in Ireland at the Opera Festival in Wexford, in Statkowski's little known Polish Opera, *Maria*. Eleanor recently made her debut in the role of Sieglinde (*Die Walküre*). A diverse soprano, other recent roles include Ortlinde in *Die Walküre*, Dama in Verdi's *Macbeth* and Annio in *La clemenza di Tito*.

In the UK and Ireland Eleanor sang at Grange Park Opera, the Dorset Opera Festival, and she returned to Wexford Festival Opera in various roles. She also sang at the Ryedale Festival in North Yorkshire, the Ashover Festival in Derbyshire, for West Sussex Opera and the Bloomsbury Festival in London.

Eleanor has sung the soprano solos in Handel's *Messiah* at Brisbane City Hall and Mozart's *Requiem* at St Andrew's Cathedral. Concerts include Opera by the Lake (Childers), Music on Sundays (QSO), Opera in the Paddock (Armidale), Mozart by Moonlight (Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne), Opera in the Park (Boroondara). Eleanor has toured Chinese Poly Theatres in opera and concert productions.



LISA HARPER-BROWN

For Opera Australia, Lisa's appearances include multiple seasons of the Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for which she received a Helpmann Award, Pamina and First Lady (*The Magic Flute*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Helena (*Midsummer Night's Dream*), Elsa (*Lohengrin*), Diana (*Orpheus in the Underworld*) and Belinda (*Dido and Aeneas*).

Other roles include Ortlinde (*Die Walküre*) State Opera South Australia, Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) Opera New Zealand, First Lady (*The Magic Flute*) Hamburg State Opera, and Elizabeth (*Maria Stuarda*) Days Bay Opera New Zealand. For Western Australia Opera, soprano solo in *Elijah*, the title role in *Alcina*, First Lady (*The Magic Flute*),

Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), Venus (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), Frasquita (*Carmen*), and in 2021 she revisited the Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*).

Concert appearances include *Knoxville: Summer Of 1915* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, *Symphony Under the Stars* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* for the Perth Festival and Verdi's *Requiem* with New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

Lisa has recorded for ABC Classic FM, Radio NZ and SouNZ and has released two albums of Australian song.

Past roles for Opera Queensland include Musetta in *La Bohème*.



LEANNE KENNEALLY

Leanne Kenneally made her opera debut as Pamina in 1996 with Opera Australia. She has since appeared with all the leading opera companies throughout Australia. In concert she has performed alongside all the major Australian symphony orchestras, choirs and Australian International music festivals as well as with the New Zealand and Bangkok symphony orchestras.

As a result of receiving Opera Foundation Australia's prestigious German Operatic Award, Leanne was a member of the Cologne Opera in Germany from 1999-2001.

Notable stage appearances have included the title role of *Lakmé*, Juliette (*Roméo et Juliette*), Countess (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*), Leila (*Les pêcheurs de perles*), Philomele (Richard Mills' *The Love of the Nightingale*) and Mimì (*La bohème*).

Leanne can be heard in the role of Venus in Saint-Saëns' *Hélène* which has been released by Melba Recordings (2008).

She recently performed the role of Helena in the Australian debut of Neil Armfield's production *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Britten in the 2021 Adelaide Festival.



EVA KONG

In 2019, soprano Eva Kong sang the title role in Opera Australia's touring production of *Madama Butterfly* and made her début as Violetta (*La traviata*) in Seoul, South Korea; she also appeared as soprano soloist in *Iris dévoilée* for Sydney Symphony Orchestra and sang Kumudha in *A Flowering Tree* for Opera Queensland. Her 2020/2021 engagements included the title role in *Manon* for Korean National Opera and the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* for Opera Queensland.

In 2017/2018, she sang La Charmeuse in *Thaïs*, took the soprano solos in *Carmina Burana* for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and sang Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) for Opera Queensland.

Her performance as Laura in *Luisa Miller* for Opera Australia earned her a Green Room Award. For the national company, she has also sung Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and Liù in *Turandot*.

Eva received a Helpmann Award Nomination and was a Green Room Award Winner for her commanding appearance as Madame Mao in *Nixon in China* for Victorian Opera.



KATIE STENZEL

Katie is a dynamic coloratura soprano. Described by Limelight Magazine as possessing "a powerful and perfectly controlled upper range", she has established herself as an engaging and multi-faceted performer across Australia and internationally with companies including State Opera South Australia, Opera Queensland, Opera Australia, The Brisbane Festival, The Adelaide Fringe Festival, and the Taipei Drama Festival in Taiwan.

Her operatic roles have included Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Niece 1 in *Peter Grimes*, Zorah in *Ruddigore*, or *The Witch's Curse!* and the creation of the role of Loretta in *The Crushing: A Gothic Opera*. She has also understudied roles including Euridice and Amore in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Kumudha in *A Flowering Tree*, Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*, Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Cunegonde in *Candide*, and Yum-Yum in *The Mikado*. She has appeared in concert works including *Messiah* (Handel), *Carmina Burana* (Orff) and *Oratorio de Noël* (Saint-Saëns).

Most recently, she made her State Opera South Australia debut in the role of Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* to great acclaim.



SOFIA TRONCOSO

Sofia Troncoso is an American soprano of South American descent. Most recent and future roles include Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera Queensland), Silandra Orontea (Pinchgut), Papagena and Pamina *The Magic Flute* (Scottish Opera), Adele *Die Fledermaus* (Diva Opera) Poppea *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Longborough Festival) and Giannetta *L'elisir d'amore* (Into Opera), as well as concert appearances with Opera Queensland, Camerata – Queensland's Chamber Orchestra, Musica Viva in Brisbane, in Melbourne and Sydney with Pinchgut Opera, and with Xi'an Symphony Orchestra in China.

Sofia studied with Priscilla Bagley at the Dramatic Institute of Vocal Arts then gained an Honors degree from Northwestern University and was selected for Lorin Maazel's Castleton Music Festival where she participated in numerous recitals, concerts and operas. Moving to Europe, she graduated with Distinction from Royal Academy of Music, and then studied at London's National Opera Studio and was a Young Artist for Les Azuriales Opera where she sang Nannetta in *Falstaff* and won the Karaviotis Prize and the Salter Prize.



HAYLEY SUGARS

Hayley was a member of the Opera Queensland Young and Developing Artist Program (2007-2009) and has enjoyed success in many national competitions, including winning the German-Australian Opera Grant in 2010. This success resulted in contracts with the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden and the Landestheater Coburg.

Operatic repertoire includes Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, the title role in *Rinaldo*, Mrs Grose in *Turn of the Screw*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Varvara in *Katja Kabanova*, Flora Bervoix in *La traviata*, Mirabella in *Der Zigeunerbaron*, Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*, Valencienne in *Merry Widow*, Prince Orlovsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, Auntie in *Peter Grimes* and Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Since returning to Australia, Hayley has performed to great acclaim for Opera Queensland, New Zealand Opera and Brisbane Festival. Most recently, she has performed Mahler's Symphony No. 2 and Handel's *Messiah*, as well as being featured as a soloist in Opera Queensland's 2021 Verdi Gala.



JOSÉ CARBÓ

Argentine-Australian baritone José Carbó is one of the most exciting operatic artists of his generation. Consistently praised for his smooth, rich, powerful voice, thrilling top notes and magnetic stage presence, José has performed in the leading houses of the world including Teatro alla Scala, Teatro Real Madrid, Los Angeles Opera, Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Seattle Opera and Opera Australia. In 2021, he sang Germont (*La traviata*) for Opera Australia and the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for Opera Queensland.

In 2018, José toured Australia with superstar Sumi Jo and sang Germont for Opera Australia; he returns to OA in 2019 as Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*). In 2017, he sang Germont opposite Ermonela Jaho and Alfio/Tonio (*Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci*) for Opera Australia – receiving Helpmann Award and Green Room Award nominations for his work. Other recent appearances include Riolo (*Florencia en el Amazonas*) for Los Angeles Opera, Germont and Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) for Victorian Opera and Zurga (*The Pearlfishers*) for Opera Australia. In 2015, José joined the roster of principal artists at the Metropolitan Opera.



MICHAEL HONEYMAN

As a principal singer with Opera Australia, Michael Honeyman has distinguished himself in the title roles of Wozzeck (Helpmann Award for Best Male Performer in an Opera), *King Roger* (Green Room Award for Male Lead in an Opera and Helpmann Award nomination for Best Male Performer in an Opera), and *Simon Boccanegra*. Other leading roles for the company include Miller (*Luisa Miller*), Valentin (*Faust*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Ford (*Falstaff*), Di Luna (*Il trovatore*), Donner (*Das Rheingold*), Ortel (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Amfortas (*Parsifal*), as well as Escamillo (*Carmen*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) and Amonasro (*Aida*) for Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, and Amonasro for Opera on the Beach.

Michael has also performed for West Australian Opera, the role of Valentin for State Opera South Australia, Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*) for Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Brisbane Festival, *Elijah* and Dvořák Requiem for Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the 40th birthday celebrations of the Sydney Opera House. He has given recitals for ArtSong Perth and for ABC Classic.

Michael studied vocal performance at Australia National University, graduating with first-class honours, and subsequently he trained at the Australian Opera Studio on full scholarship.



SIMON LOBELSON

With a career that has spanned 4 continents and 85 operatic roles from baroque to contemporary and lyric to dramatic, Simon Lobelson has established himself as one of the most versatile Australian baritones of his generation, and champion of contemporary music. He is highly respected as a pedagogue, with superlative press reviews and a Helpmann Award nomination for his work with Opera Australia. Simon has performed extensively with companies such as The Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Opera Australia, Pinchgut Opera, Sydney Chamber Opera, London Mozart Players, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Philharmonia, English Chamber Orchestra, Israel Camerata and the Lucerne Festival.

Simon has worked under such conductors as Boulez, Halsey, Dutoit, McCreesh and Bonyng, and recorded for Chandos, Toccata and ABC Classics. Having studied at the Royal College of Music on scholarship, he is now a lecturer in Voice & Opera at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Simon recently completed his doctorate on Vocalism in Contemporary Opera and is invited to present at the 10th International Congress of Vocal Teachers in Vienna in 2022.



EMMA PEARSON as Violetta Valéry in
Opera Queensland's *La Traviata*, 2015



CARLOS E. BÁRCENAS RAMÍREZ

Born in Cali, Colombia, Carlos studied marine biology before having singing lessons with Gustavo A. Marquez. He then moved to Melbourne, Australia where his opera career blossomed. He holds a Bachelor of Music Performance and a Master of Music (Opera Performance) at University of Melbourne where he was awarded the Keith G. Chapman Memorial Scholarship.

In Australia he has worked with Victorian Opera, GSOV – Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Victoria, Melbourne Lyric Opera, Opera Australia, Australian Ballet, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Short Black Opera. He has also worked in Italy, Germany, and Colombia. His roles have included Marco (*The Gondoliers*), Alexander (*Il re pastore*), Michael (*Pecan Summer*), Tony (*Master Class* Terrence McNally), Steuermann (*Der fliegende Holländer*), Edgardo and Normanno (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Sir Bruno (*I puritani*), Flavio (*Norma*), The Pied Piper (*The Pied Piper*), Saint Chavez (*Four Saints in Three Acts*), Maese Pedro (*Master Peter's Puppet Show*), Prince April (*Sleeping Beauty*), Witch (*Hansel and Gretel*), Prince Charming (*Cendrillon*), Arnaldo (*Guillaume Tell*), Elvino (*La sonnambula*), Tebaldo (*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*) and Nadir (*The Pearl Fishers*). Carlos received a Green Room award for his performance of Steuermann in *Der fliegende Holländer*.



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YVONNE FONTANE as Carmen in
Opera Queensland's *Carmen*, 2004

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MARIANA HONG as Cio-Cio-San and
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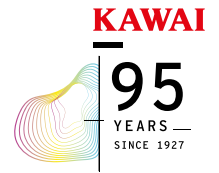
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