

OPERA QUEENSLAND PRESENTS

300 YEARS OF MUSIC ⚡ 20 GREAT SONGS ⚡ 1 INCREDIBLE SHOW



DO WE NEED ANOTHER HERO?



Opera Queensland acknowledges and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of the land and seas where we live and perform.

We acknowledge and respect the knowledge, cultures, languages, songs and dances they have created and shared for at least 65,000 years.

Our commitment is to listen and walk respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities, to celebrate the stories and songs of this place and its First Peoples.

WELCOME



Where would we be without our heroes? From Odysseus in the *Odyssey* to Rey in *The Force Awakens*, the hero's journey has been a great source of inspiration when confronted by the various hurdles we meet along life's way.

The first opera ever performed, Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, used Orpheus's descent into the Underworld, to explore how far we might go for someone we love and how fragile trust can be as a foundation for that love. On this adventure the hero wielded a lyre to help him battle the furies and soothe his broken spirit.

In the centuries since, opera has drawn deeply from the pantheon of heroes to entertain audiences. Initially they were gods or royals or warriors, until Mozart came along and as was his wont, inverted the norm to present us with the servant couple Figaro and Susanna, the heroes of *The Marriage of Figaro*. A few years later, the French Revolution changed our idea of the hero forever.

In her ingenious way Laura and her merry band of collaborators have taken a deep dive into this history to ask a question that feels more and more pressing by the day. Moving between operatic and popular repertoire, *Do We Need Another Hero?* invites us to reflect on the nature of what it takes to be a hero, finding an answer that may be closer to home than we imagine.

After launching in Brisbane, the show will tour to twenty different regional centres. Travelling to all four corners of the state, the production embraces Opera Queensland's mission to take work of the highest calibre to audiences wherever they may be. Making the cast and crew, in my eyes at least, a bona fide collection of heroes.

To set out on this adventure we have a team of heroes without whom none of this would be possible. Our chief heroes on this adventure are Arts Queensland and Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, whose investment and commitment to our regional programs is vital to our achieving all that we do.

Offering major support are two new corporate partners, Downtown Toyota and St Hilda's School and providing essential supplies are Cisco, Data#3, Kawai, Outback Touring Queensland Association and Rex Airlines.

Thank you to all the local stage crews and presenters who will welcome us to their venues and to all the artists and arts workers involved in creating *Do We Need Another Hero?*, we are very fortunate to have a team so full of talent and with such beautiful voices. We send them off with all good wishes, aware that they are continuing a tradition of sharing stories through song, that is as old as the country they travel through.

Patrick Nolan
CEO & Artistic Director

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Reflecting on the creation of our new production, *Do We Need Another Hero?*, I am filled to the brim with immense gratitude. I can say with total honesty that this show is not the one I initially dreamt of, it is not what I set out to create and truthfully, I am so damn thankful for that. This show, is so much better than that one. From the very first creative development

it became evident that the collaborative nature of this production would be its backbone.

From the outset, Luke Volker, Emma Nightingale, Marcus Corowa, Gabrielle Diaz, Nick Kirkup, Jason Barry-Smith, Shikara Ringdahl, and Ruby Clark have contributed their exceptional musical talents and offered up their own personal journeys around heroism.

The funny thing about considering 'Heroes' is that everyone has an opinion on the subject.

Together, we delved into the highs and lows of the hero's journey, discovering that, more often than not, we were left with more questions than answers.

Our journey through the making of *Do We Need Another Hero?* has been one of discovery, vulnerability, and more often than not, laughter. But above all, it has been a profound reminder of the importance of asking questions – of looking beyond the surface and exploring what lies beneath. Each artist brought their perspective, questioning and reshaping the narrative where necessary, pushing me to consider perspectives I hadn't considered. This process has not only enriched the show but has also been a testament to the power of collective creativity.

Our aim has been not to provide answers but to spark curiosity – to challenge perceptions of heroism and invite everyone to question the narratives we often take for granted. To do so through the vehicle of music, the greatest connector. The diversity of heroism is mirrored in the diversity of music presented in this show. And once again I can only sit back and applaud our amazing artists as they tackle new genres with new instruments to create the fullest experience on stage possible.

As we prepare to share our work with you, I am reminded of the incredible journey we have undertaken as a team. This production is a celebration of that journey – a legacy of curiosity and a testament to the power of collaboration. I am profoundly grateful to each member of our team, to Opera Queensland for this opportunity to create and to you, our audience, for embarking on this journey with us.

Let's continue to question, to explore, and to understand, together.

Laura Hansford
Director & Writer

PROGRAM

SIDE A

Holding Out for a Hero / Heldenmotivs
Bonnie Tyler / *Der Ring des Nibelungen*

Be Gone, Oh Grief that Plagued Me
Orfeo ed Euridice

Where You Lead
Carole King

Super Powers / Cartoon Heroes
Ookla the Mok / Aqua

Someone to Fall Back On / Working Class Man
Jason Robert Brown / Jimmy Barnes

Largo al factotum della città
Il Barbiere di Siviglia

Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood / Superwoman
Nina Simone / Alicia Keys

Bad Things
Jace Everett

Bad Things
Camila Cabello

Who's Gonna Save Us?
The Living End

SIDE B

Help! / Pace, pace mio Dio!
The Beatles / *La Forza del Destino*

Paparazzi
Lady GaGa

E lucevan le stelle
Tosca

Uprising
Muse

Man in the Mirror
Michael Jackson

Children Will Listen / No One Is Alone
Into the Woods

Welcome to the Black Parade
My Chemical Romance

MEGAMIX





© Billie Wilson-Coffey



CREATIVE TEAM & CAST

CREATIVE TEAM

Director & Writer
Laura Hansford

Musical Director &
Arranger
Luke Volker

Assistant Director
Emma Nightingale

Costumes
Karen Cochet

Sets
Laura Hansford

Lighting
Wesley Bluff

CAST

Jason Barry-Smith

Ruby Clark

Marcus Corowa

Shikara Ringdahl

Luke Volker

TOURING QUEENSLAND APRIL – JUNE 2024

This performance lasts approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes, including one 20 minute interval.

No portion of this performance may be recorded, filmed, taped, broadcast or mechanically reproduced without the written consent of the Artist and/or the Presenter.



DIRECTOR & WRITER

Laura Hansford

Laura has worked on Opera Queensland (OQ) productions for the last decade as both an artistic and technical collaborator. She directed OQ's most successful touring production *Are You Lonesome Tonight* (2021), co-directed *The Sopranos* (OQ) and *Home Grown Opera* (for OQ and BLEACH*), and wrote and directed the regional touring production, *Lady Sings the Maroons*.

In 2021/2022 Laura was a resident Director with Circa and was the Project Lead on their inclusive Circus program Circability. She was the Associate Director on Circa's Italian Baroque presented with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra at Sydney Festival 2022.

Laura previously worked as the Artistic Associate for OQ and has acted as Associate Director on a variety of productions – for OQ: *Così fan tutte* (2023) *The Marriage of Figaro* (2021), *Tosca* (2019), *Songs to Die For* (2019); for West Australian Opera *La bohème* (2023) and for Victorian Opera: *The Barber of Seville* (2019), *Pelléas and Mélisande* (2018). She currently holds the position of Director of Learning, Regional and Community with OQ.

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

Forthcoming engagements include being Associate Director on the Opera Conference Production of *Rusalka* opening with West Australian Opera in 2024.



MUSICAL DIRECTOR & ARRANGER

Luke Volker

Luke is a Brisbane-based music director, dramaturg, composer, arranger and accompanist. With a particular love of developing new work, he has contributed to cabarets, concerts, musical theatre and opera, across Australia and internationally.

Credits as music director include the *Hogwarts™ Frog Choir* and *Universal Monsters Live Rock & Roll Show®* for Universal Studios Japan; *Lady Sings The Maroons* for Opera Queensland; *Tick, Tick... Boom!* for THAT Production Company; and national tours of *The Owl & The Pussycat*, *Lesbian Love Stories*, *#FirstWorldWhiteGirls*, and Babushka's *Happily Ever After* (for which he won a Matilda Award); as well as developmental productions for QPAC, Metro Arts, Dead Puppets Society, and many others.

Luke's arrangements have been performed at Brisbane Festival, Adelaide Fringe Festival, Melbourne Cabaret Festival, Sydney WorldPride, State Opera South Australia, New York's Green Room 42, and on P&O, Princess, and Carnival cruise lines. He is the composer of *There Once Was A Puffin* (an online mini-opera for children commissioned during 2020's lockdown period), and regularly writes and arranges for Opera Queensland's Learning, Regional & Community program.

Luke has played keyboards on various touring musicals, performs regularly with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, was resident accompanist for both SingEasy's and Underground Broadway's musical theatre industry nights, and has worked with such celebrated artists as Caroline O'Connor, Lea Salonga, Faith Prince, Rhonda Burchmore, and Philip Quast.



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Emma Nightingale

Emma Nightingale is a versatile and independent performer, director, and writer, dedicated to exploring the vast spectrum of human emotions through her work. With a diverse skill set encompassing vocal performance, writing, directing, and producing, Emma centres joy in the creative process, ensuring a transformative experience for all involved in and impacted by her artistry.

As a lyric soprano, Emma's credits in 2023 include soloist for the 50th Anniversary of the Brisbane City Pops Orchestra, and *America!* for Voxalis. In 2022 Emma made her principal debut in the Festival of Outback Opera Singing in the Night and Dark Sky Serenade. She also featured as Soloist in Home Grown Opera, and chorus in *La Traviata* (Opera Queensland).

For OQ and shake and stir's schools shows, Emma has played Juniper (*The Frog Prince*), Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*) and Mimi (*La Bohème*). Emma is a regular chorus member with OQ, appearing in Verdi, *Don Giovanni*, *Peter Grimes*, *The Sopranos*, and *Ruddigore*. Emma has also appeared as a guest artist for the popular Opera Queensland event Sing Sing Sing.

Other roles and engagements include The Foreign Woman in Menotti's *The Consul*, for The CoOperaTive, The Seven Sopranos for BLEACH* Festival on the Gold Coast, Brisbane Lord Mayors Christmas Carols, Opera in the Gardens, Opera by the Lake, and in concert with The Brisbane City Pops Orchestra.

In 2022 Emma made her first foray into directing, as assistant director of the Opera Queensland and shake and stir schools shows, and in 2023 returned as assistant director to remount *La Bohème* and *Fizz* for Opera Queensland, and *The Frog Prince* for State Opera of South Australia.



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*. She co-designed *Songs of Love and War* and *Chrysalis* in 2021, *The Sopranos* in 2022 and, most recently, *Macbeth* (March 2023).





SINGER

Jason Barry-Smith

Jason Barry-Smith's study in Brisbane, Munich, London and Rome led him to a career on the Australian operatic stage, and he is equally in demand as a performer, teacher, conductor, arranger, director and compère.

Over the past three decades Jason has performed in or directed many of Opera Queensland's most successful productions and programs. He also performed the title role in *Billy Budd* for the Brisbane Biennial, Papageno in *The Magic Flute* for Opera Australia (Opera on the Beach), Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* for the Tokyo Arts Foundation, Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier* and Belcore in *The Elixir of Love* for State Opera South Australia, Mamoud in *The Death of Klinghoffer* and the title role in *The Barber of Seville* for New Zealand Opera, Tony in *West Side Story* for Brisbane Festival, and Major-General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance* for Essgee Entertainment; and he created the roles of Aldo Marini in *Mimma – A Musical of War & Friendship*, Samuel in *Electric Lenin* for NORPA and Julian in *Quartet* for the New Zealand Arts Festival.

Since 2019, Jason has been the regular host of OQ's popular Sing Sing Sing events. In 2021 he travelled to Winton and Longreach for the inaugural Festival of Outback Opera as singer and compère, and in 2022 toured with *The Sopranos* as well as creating the role of Marchese d'Obigny in the new production of *La traviata* at QPAC's Lyric Theatre. He's also directed the collaborative program *Composed in Queensland*, which saw him working together with singer-songwriters Megan Washington, Sara Storer, Marcus Corowa and school students across Queensland in the creation of original songs celebrating their regional communities. In 2023 he returned to Cunnamulla to lead workshops, compère and perform in the inaugural Outback River Lights Festival, and lead the community team for OQ's Festival of Outback Opera.



SINGER

Ruby Clark

A musical theatre graduate from Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Ruby Clark is a Sydney-based actor, singer, dancer, musician & stuntwoman.

In recent years, she has performed the roles of Reza in *Once: The Musical* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company (2022), Rizzo in *Grease: The Music* for Royal Caribbean Cruises Australia and Maureen Johnson in *RENT: The Musical* (QPAC & MW Entertainment), amongst others.

In addition to theatre, she is also an accomplished violinist and has worked professionally in bands, cabarets and shows including *Lesbian Love Stories* for The Local Lesbians, *Bright Star* for Pursued by Bear and *Spring Awakening* for Metro Arts. In 2023, Ruby performed in the stage show *Gentleman Prefer Blondes* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company, in addition to their production of *Once*.

Ruby is excited and thrilled to be joining the cast for Opera Queensland's *Do We Need Another Hero?* on its regional 2024 tour.



SINGER

Marcus Corowa

Marcus Corowa has established himself as one of the country's most in-demand talents, carving out a vibrant decade-long career that spans performance, mentoring and advocacy.

As a performer, Marcus has captured the hearts of Australia with his soulful voice and charming stage presence.

Career highlights include the Australian premiere of Broadway blockbuster *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*; Opera Queensland's Festival of Outback Opera; Opera Australia's *Bran Nue Dae*; Belvoir Theatre's *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*; Sydney Theatre Company's *The Secret River*; QPAC and Queensland Theatre's *The Sunshine Club*, and Victorian Opera's *The Visitors*.

As a devoted mentor and leader, Marcus draws on his Aboriginal and South Sea Islander heritage to advocate for greater diversity and inclusion within the creative industries.

For Opera Queensland, Marcus performed his first solo recital for the Opera Queensland Studio Series (2022), featured in the regional touring productions *Are You Lonesome Tonight* (2021) and *Lady Sings the Maroons* (2023), performed at Festival of Outback Opera 2022, and wrote three new songs with and for students in Charleville, Quilpie and Cunnamulla as part of Opera Queensland's project *Composed in Queensland*.



SINGER

Shikara Ringdahl

Australian mezzo-soprano Shikara Ringdahl is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU) and holds a Bachelor of Music. She made her professional debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (SSO) singing Elgar's *Sea Pictures* Op. 37 under the baton of Benjamin Northey, and became the first vocalist invited by SSO to tour in their 80 years of regional touring.

Shikara's opera credits include *Der Komponist* in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* conducted by Simone Young AM, Larina in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* conducted by Richard Hetherington, and Mrs Herring in Britten's *Albert Herring*, directed by Bruce Beresford for QCGU and Brisbane Festival. Shikara has also been a resident Young Artist with the Israeli Opera's Meitar Opera Studio.

Shikara has been a finalist in the IFAC Handa Australian Singing Competition, New Zealand Aria Competition, Sydney Eisteddfod Opera Scholarship, and winner of the BlueScope WIN Wollongong Eisteddfod Opera Scholarship.

In 2023 Shikara joined Opera Queensland's (OQ) Young Artist Program and made her company debut as Second Apparition in *Macbeth*. She also performed with the OQ Chorus in *Macbeth*, *Così fan tutte* and *Aida*. Shikara returns as a Young Artist this year and is thrilled to join the cast of *Do We Need Another Hero?*



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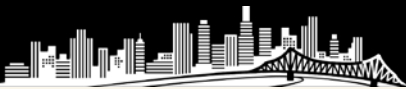
Downtown Toyota is hitting the road with Opera Queensland, providing vehicles to support their regional tour of "Do We Need Another Hero?"

Together, we're driving transformative cultural experiences to communities across the state, enriching and uniting them through the arts.



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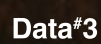
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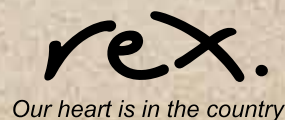
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Data#3

KAWAI



DO WE NEED ANOTHER HERO?

ITINERARY

BRISBANE	Brisbane Racing Club	Friday, April 19
TOOWOOMBA	Armitage Centre	Saturday, April 20
MARYBOROUGH	Brolga Theatre	Tuesday, April 23
PROSERPINE	The Proserpine Entertainment Centre	Saturday, April 27
INGHAM	JL Kelly Theatre	Thursday, May 2
HUGHENDEN	Festival of Outback Skies	Sunday, May 5
CLONCURRY	Cloncurry Shire Hall	Wednesday, May 8
MOUNT ISA	Civic Centre	Friday, May 10
WINTON	Crack-Up Sisters DustArena	Wednesday, May 15
LONGREACH	QANTAS Founders Museum	Monday, May 20
BARCALDINE	Barcaldine Town Hall	Wednesday, May 22
BLACKALL	Blackall Historical Woolscour	Thursday, May 23
QUILPIE	Baldy Top	Saturday, May 25
STONEHENGE	Stonehenge	Tuesday, May 28
ROMA	Cultural Centre – Auditorium	Thursday, May 30
GOONDIWINDI	Goondiwindi Waggamba Community Cultural Centre	Saturday, June 1
CALOUNDRA	The Events Centre, Playhouse Theatre	Friday, June 7
GOLD COAST	ADCO Amphitheatre, Bond University	Saturday, June 8

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