

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

OPERA QUEENSLAND LAUNCHES A POWERFUL 2023 SEASON WITH A PROGRAM OF WORKS ALIVE TO THE COMPLEXITY OF OUR TIMES

Opera Queensland is fast becoming known as one of Australia's most dynamic and original opera companies, launching a 2023 program that once again shows their commitment to Queensland artists and stories.

Three mainstage seasons at QPAC, featuring some of Australia's most thrilling opera singers, a new regional production celebrating the Queensland songbook, a return of the popular **Studio Series** and the **Festival of Outback Opera** form the backbone of their 2023 program.

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said Opera Queensland's 2023 program will deliver high-quality arts and cultural experiences for audiences across Queensland.

"Showcasing some of Queensland's incredibly talented artists, creatives and organisations, and featuring contemporary stories and reimagined classics, Opera Queensland's 2023 mainstage and regional programming promises to be an electrifying celebration of opera for audiences across Queensland," Minister Enoch said.

"In 2023, Opera Queensland will further develop its unique outback festival and regional activities, strengthening cultural tourism in Queensland and providing opportunities for audiences across the state to experience opera and the joy of live music.

"Opera Queensland's priorities to present innovative content, showcase Queensland artists and expand regional reach and engagement with new audiences aligns with this government's vision for the arts sector.

"Opera Queensland supports the delivery of *Creative Together*, the Queensland Government's ten-year roadmap for arts, culture and creativity, broadening audience reach and nurturing emerging talent as we prepare for the significant opportunities presented by the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

Power in all its guises, is at the heart of the company's **QPAC** seasons. Opera Queensland CEO & Artistic Director **Patrick Nolan** said, "**Macbeth** is a cautionary tale about the abuse of power, **Così fan tutte** upends the rules of desire and **Aida** examines where personal and political power intersect.

"I am delighted to present a program of works that are alive to the complexity of our times, leaning into our individual and collective challenges and celebrating the joy that comes from telling stories through song," Mr Nolan said.

"The demands of the past few years have presented us with the opportunity to show audiences how vital and responsive opera is as an artform."

Shakespeare's tale of treachery and an unbound lust for power is brought vividly to life through the passion and fury of Verdi's renowned score when **Macbeth** plays QPAC's Concert Hall for two concert performances on **9 and 11 March 2023**.

Sung by the acclaimed Opera Queensland Chorus, baritone **José Carbó** as Macbeth, rising star, **Anna Louise-Cole** making her Brisbane debut as Lady Macbeth, and **Rosario La Spina** as Macduff, accompanied by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of incoming Chief Conductor **Umberto Clerici** with direction by **Laura Hansford**.

Ideas of love and fidelity are put to the test in a new production of Mozart's sublime, **Così fan tutte**. After her phenomenal success leading the Queensland Symphony Orchestra on *The Human Voice* and *The Call*, **Zoe Zeniodi** returns to conduct this new production that asks if romantic love can truly bring happiness.

Directed by Patrick Nolan, as a follow up to his hilarious *The Marriage of Figaro*, this new production will again reveal Mozart's timeless understanding of our hubris and fragility. Playing QPAC's Playhouse from **10 to 26 August 2023**.

The final mainstage production of 2023 is a grand production of Verdi's **Aida**, presented in association with Opera Australia in QPAC's Lyric Theatre from **6 to 20 December 2023**.

Sensational Australian soprano **Natalie Aroyan** performs as the enslaved princess, Aida, while **Elena Gabouri** reprises her critically acclaimed turn as her rival, Amneris, and **Diego Torre** is Radamès, the man they both love.

A musical and visual feast featuring 10 towering floor-to-ceiling digital screens, immersive video design, grand costumes and sets, the combined vocal power of the Opera Queensland Chorus and Opera Australia Chorus and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, conducted by **Lorenzo Passerini**.

Following the success of 2021's hit *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, Opera Queensland takes a deep dive into the Queensland songbook for their regional tour with the new production, ***Lady Sings the Maroons***.

The phenomenal voices of **Jess Hitchcock**, **Irena Lysiuk** and **Marcus Corowa** bring new life to songs by great Queensland artists such as **The Saints**, **Gladys Moncrieff**, **Savage Garden** and **Harold Blair**.

Nolan said, "Our regional audiences are passionate about new work with stories that reflect their own experiences, and we're excited about touring a show full of great Queensland songs, performed by three exceptionally talented young singers." *Lady Sings the Maroons* hits the road in May.

Returning to Winton and Longreach for a third year, the ***Festival of Outback Opera*** runs from **16 to 21 May 2023**, as part of QMF's **Queensland Music Trails**.

In its first two outings audiences embraced the remarkable experience on offer at the festival, with tickets selling out well in advance. The major festival concerts, ***Dark Sky Serenade*** in Winton on **19 May** and ***Singing in the Night*** in Longreach on **20 May** are complemented by pop-up performances, live events, panel discussions and special performances of *Lady Sings the Maroons*.

The ever-popular ***Opera Queensland Studio Series*** returns in 2023 with a new cast of singers to perform these intimate recitals.

Artists this year include **Mirusia**, **Paul Tabone**, **Conal Coad**, **Irena Lysiuk**, **Lorena Gore**, **Michael Honeyman**, real-life couple **Sofia Troncoso** and **Dane Lam** and pianists **Alex Raineri**, **Sally Whitwell** and **Sarka Budinska**.

"In developing the 2023 *Studio Series*, we asked these internationally renowned artists to simply sing us an hour of their favourite songs, giving the audience incredible insight into the music that has defined their careers," Mr Nolan said.

Also touring in 2023 is Opera Queensland's highly regarded schools' program with a revival of the whacky, weird and wonderful production ***FIZZ!*** – based on Donizetti's classic comic opera, *The Elixir of Love* – for primary schools and ***La bohème*** – Puccini's masterpiece reimagined as a tale of resilience, friendship and love – playing to secondary schools across the state.

The two productions, presented in partnership with **shake & stir theatre co.**, will play for limited Brisbane seasons at Opera Queensland Studio during the September school holidays.

Audiences can sing with the stars through Opera Queensland's year-long calendar of participatory events and workshops.

Sing Sing Sing, the monthly community singalong and social event, returns in 2023 with lovers of song invited to raise their voices in unison at venues across the state.

Young people and adults can take their singing to the next level with a diverse ***Workshop*** series at Opera Queensland Studio covering repertoire, stagecraft, musicianship and performance.

Music lovers are invited to join ***Opera Club***, an exclusive opportunity to step behind the scenes, connect with people who share a passion for opera and enjoy exclusive events, experiences and special offers.

Subscriptions to Opera Queensland's Season 2023 are available as an exclusive pre-sale to 2023 Season Subscribers and Opera Club members from **Tuesday 18 October** and to the general public from **Tuesday 25 October**.

Subscribers receive a 20 per cent discount when purchasing tickets to two or more performances and priority access to the best seats in the house.



Single ticket pre-sales commence for selected ticketholders and Opera Club members on **Monday 14 November** before a general sale on **Monday 21 November**.

Children aged 17 and under can attend with a paying adult for 50 per cent off the adult single ticket price (excluding Opera Queensland Gala) and concessions are available to full-time students as well as Pensioner Concession Card and Veteran Gold Card holders.

View Opera Queensland's full **Season 2023** program, join Opera Club and purchase subscription packages and tickets at oq.com.au

Opera Queensland acknowledges the First Peoples of the Lands across Queensland, upon which we perform. We pay our respects to all of Queensland's First Peoples, their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.

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