

Queensland

Opera Queensland presents

FESTIVAL OF OUTBACK OPERA



19 – 25 MAY 2026
WINTON • LONGREACH



The Festival of Outback Opera is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, the Outback Queensland Tourism Association, the University of Queensland and Haymans Electrical.

The Festival of Outback Opera takes place on the lands of the Koa and Iningai peoples.

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.



A MESSAGE FROM THE HON JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS



Delivering outstanding performances within the rugged grandeur of Outback Queensland, Opera Queensland has created a festival unlike any other – celebrating sublime voices, awe-inspiring landscapes and the warmth of local community.

Over the last six years, the Festival of Outback Opera has become a highlight on Queensland's cultural calendar – with thousands of local, interstate and international visitors making an annual pilgrimage out west.

In 2026, the festival will activate the iconic Queensland towns of Winton and Longreach for seven days of open-air concerts, community events, conversations and unrivalled country hospitality.

Program highlights include family-friendly performances of *The Adventures of Figaro*, the picturesque *Dark Sky Serenade* and Opera Queensland's hit show *All Together Now!*, which masterfully blends classic arias with feel-good favorites.

The festival promises some of opera's most exciting homegrown and international talent, including acclaimed international tenor Filipe Manu, who has performed everywhere from the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, to the Royal Albert Hall.

The Crisafulli Government is proud to support Opera Queensland which has been nurturing local musical talent and captivating audiences across the State for more than four decades.

Through the Festival of Outback Opera, Opera Queensland is delivering on the Crisafulli Government's 10-year arts and cultural strategy, Queensland's Time to Shine, by enhancing access to uniquely Queensland arts experiences and growing the state's reputation as a dynamic cultural destination.

The festival has a significant economic impact in Western Queensland – contributing more than \$1.4 million to the local economy and delivering more than 5,100 visitor nights last year alone.

On red dirt country, beneath a canvas of stars – I wish you all an unforgettable experience at the Festival of Outback Opera 2026.

WELCOME



Welcome to the Festival of Outback Opera.

For a week, we invite you to immerse yourself in music, stories, local hospitality, and the landscapes of Winton and Longreach. Whether this is your first visit or you are returning as part of the festival family, we are delighted to have you with us.

The Festival of Outback Opera, or FOO as it is affectionately known, was born of a desire to set the emotional energy at the heart of opera against a landscape unlike any city theatre. Here in the Outback, we have the opportunity to listen differently. Sweeping vistas and star-filled skies let the music settle in us, revealing the wonder the musicians and singers conjure.

We are thrilled to welcome Filipe Manu as lead tenor this year. New Zealand-raised, of Tongan heritage, Filipe is a graduate of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House and has made debuts at Covent Garden, Wiener Staatsoper, Opéra National de Paris, and Staatsoper Hamburg.

We also welcome maestro Richard Mills, joining the festival for the first time, and thank him for curating and leading the two gala concerts. Having been part of the very first FOO, members of Camerata, Queensland's Chamber Orchestra, led by Brendan Joyce, return to play with The University of Queensland's Pulse Chamber Ensemble. They are joined by a stellar cast of Australian singers: Leanne Kenneally, James Roser, Aylish Ryan, Madeleine Stephens, and Katie Stenzel, alongside the University of Queensland Singers.

Beyond the gala concerts, music spills into the streets of Winton and Longreach all week: our touring production of *All Together Now!* at the Dustarena in Winton and the Longreach Showgrounds, *The Adventures of Figaro* in primary schools across the region, the Long Lunch at the Qantas Founders Museum, the Opera Ball at Smithy's, and pop-up performances throughout. Everyone is invited to join in.

To bring a festival of this scale and ambition to the Outback takes the effort of many. Behind the week's musical riches stands the insight of our Head of Music, Narelle French. We offer our thanks to Narelle, to our Director of Programming, Simone Doczkal, to all the OQ core staff and to our Board, and community partners for bringing the festival's many strands together.

We are grateful to the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, whose support sustains so much of our regional work, and to Peter Coaldrake, whose generous contribution enables the work we do with community events around the festival.

Thank you also to Arts Queensland, Tourism and Events Queensland, and the Councils of Winton and Longreach, whose belief in the festival has secured its continued success.

And to our sponsors, Haymans Electrical, The University of Queensland, Downtown Toyota, Kawai, Outback Queensland Tourism Association, Stuartholme, and Western Queensland Spirit: thank you.

Finally, to you, our audience: thank you for being here. Across performances large and small, from intimate pop-ups with the UQ Singers to the gala concerts and Jason Barry-Smith leading Sing Sing Sing, we hope you find moments of joy, wonder, and connection. Please say hello and tell us what makes the Festival of Outback Opera special for you.

Patrick Nolan
CEO & Artistic Director

FESTIVAL OF OUTBACK OPERA

WHAT'S ON

WINTON

FESTIVAL OPENING CEREMONY, RECITAL & MOVIE

TUE 19 MAY, 6.00PM | The Royal Theatre

THE DAWN CHORUS - BIRDWATCHING TOUR

WED 20 MAY & FRI 20 MAY, 7.00AM | Departs Winton

MUSIC TRIVIA*

WED 20 MAY, 3:00 PM | North Gregory Hotel

ALL TOGETHER NOW!*

WED 20 MAY, 6.30PM | DustArena

CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS*

THU 21 MAY, 11.45AM | North Gregory Hotel

DARK SKY SERENADE

THU 21 MAY, 5.30PM | Australian Age of Dinosaurs

THE ADVENTURES OF FIGARO* (FAMILY PERFORMANCE)

FRI 22 MAY, 12.00PM | Winton Shire Hall

THE SUNDOWNER*

FRI 22 MAY, 5.00 PM | Way Out West Sign

TINY CONCERT PERFORMANCES DURING THE FESTIVAL*

Follow us on social media or visit the
Festival Hub for details



@operaqueensland
#FestivalOfOutbackOpera

*FREE EVENT - PLEASE REGISTER ONLINE

LONGREACH

LONG LUNCH

FRI 22 MAY, 11.30AM | Qantas Founders Museum

ALL TOGETHER NOW!

FRI 22 MAY, FROM 2.00PM | Longreach Show
Visit the Longreach Show to experience pop-up
performances from All Together Now!

2.00pm – Sheep Pavilion

3.00pm – Arts Pavilion

4.00pm – Main Stage

5.00pm – Main Stage

SINGING IN THE NIGHT

SAT 23 MAY, 5.30PM | Camden Park Station

SING SING SING*

SUN 24 MAY, 10.30AM | The Drover's Place

OPERA BALL

SUN 24 MAY, 6.00PM | Smithy's Camp

THE ADVENTURES OF FIGARO* (FAMILY PERFORMANCE)

MON 25 MAY, 10.00AM | Longreach Cultural Centre

CREATIVE TEAM & CAST

DARK SKY SERENADE & SINGING IN THE NIGHT

CREATIVE TEAM

Musical Director, Conductor & Co-compère Richard Mills
Director Patrick Nolan
Lighting Bernie Tan-Hayes
Sound Designer Geoff McGahan

With Camerata – Queensland's Chamber Orchestra joined by the University of Queensland School of Music Pulse Chamber Ensemble

CAST

Filipe Manu
Leanne Kenneally^
James Roser
Aylish Ryan
Katie Stenzel (Co-compère)
Madeleine Stephens*
Piano Narelle French

With the University of Queensland Singers

* Dark Sky Serenade ^ Singing In The Night

FESTIVAL OPENING RECITAL

CAST

Compère Jason-Barry-Smith
Katie Stenzel
Piano Luke Volker

MUSIC TRIVIA

CAST

Host Amanda-Lyn Pearson

ALL TOGETHER NOW!

CREATIVE TEAM & CAST

Director Emma Nightingale
Musical Director Luke Volker
Concept Laura Hansford
Jason Barry-Smith
Gabrielle Diaz
Maddie Stephens

Post-performance Entertainment with Bradley McCaw (Winton)

THE ADVENTURES OF FIGARO

CAST

Tashana Hardy
Freddie Klein
Liam Jackson
On screen Actor / Bartolo Bryan Proberts

LONG LUNCH

CAST

Elizabeth Cooper
Leanne Kenneally
Lachlann Lawton
Piano Narelle French
Trumpet Malcolm Strong

SING SING SING

CAST

Host Jason Barry-Smith
Elizabeth Cooper
Tashana Hardy
Freddie Klein
Piano Narelle French
Trumpet Malcolm Strong

OPERA BALL

CREATIVE TEAM & CAST

Musical Director Jason Barry-Smith
Pianist Luke Volker
Emcee Gabrielle Diaz
Liam Jackson
Maddie Stephens

University of Queensland School of Music String Quartet



RICHARD MILLS

Conductor

Internationally recognised composer Richard Mills, AO, pursues a diverse career as composer, conductor and artistic director, with an extensive discography of orchestral works including his own compositions and the film music of Franz Waxman with the QSO (*Preis der Deutscher Schallplatten Kritik*, 1992).

Richard's posts have included Artistic Director of both Victorian Opera and West Australian Opera, Artistic Director of the Adelaide Chamber Orchestra, Director of the Australian Music Project for Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Musica Viva's Composer of the Year.

Most recently Richard has conducted the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for an ABC recording as part of their 50 Fanfares project; *Voyages* for Darwin Symphony; the world premiere of his new opera *Galileo, Elektra, Butterfly Lovers* (Mills), *La Cenerentola* and *Salome* for Victorian Opera; *Glimpses and Dialogues from Galileo* at Perth Festival; *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, a gala concert and *Tosca* for Opera Queensland; *Voss* and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* for State Opera South Australia; *The Sound of History* (for Adelaide Festival) and his Christmas oratorio *Nativity* with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. His opera *Butterfly Lovers* was also performed in collaboration with Wild Rice Theatre Company at the Victoria Theatre, Singapore.

Richard's concert performance of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* with the Australian Youth Orchestra for Queensland Music Festival, won the Helpmann Award for Best Classical Concert in 2005.

Richard Mills has been Lecturer in Composition and Conducting at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, and director of the Symphony Australia Composer Development Program, run in collaboration with Orchestra Victoria. He is currently a Senior Fellow, Faculty of Music, at the University of Melbourne. He has also been the recipient of an Ian Potter Foundation Fellowship.



PATRICK NOLAN

Director

Currently the CEO and Artistic Director of Opera Queensland, Patrick has created productions for Opera Australia, West Australian 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: *Così fan tutte* Opera Queensland (OQ), *La voix humaine*, *The Human Voice* OQ, *The Marriage of Figaro* OQ and WA Opera; *Oscar and Lucinda* OQ with Sydney Chamber Opera and Victorian Opera; *Tosca* OQ and WA Opera; *Verdi Requiem* OQ with Bleach Festival; *A Flowering Tree* OQ; *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 premiere of *Love in the Age of Therapy* by Paul Grabowsky and Joanna Murray-Smith for the Sydney and Melbourne Festivals.



BERNIE TAN-HAYES

Lighting

Bernie Tan-Hayes has had a long and distinguished career in Theatre and Architectural lighting and AV design.

His credits for Opera Queensland include: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Human Voice*, *The Call*, Festival of Outback Opera.

Other credits for both theatre and Opera: Queensland Theatre, *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *God of Carnage*. New Zealand Opera: *La bohème* and *Eugene Onegin*. Pinchgut Opera: *Semele*, *The Fairy Queen*, *Orfeo*, *Dardanus*, *Idomeneo*, *Juditha Triumphans*, *David and Jonathan*, *Lormindo* and *Orpheus + Eurydice*. Brisbane Festival: *Miracle in Brisbane*. Sydney Conservatorium of Music: *Die Fledermaus*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *The Pirates of Penzance*. Opera Australia: Opera in the Bowl, *Meet in Beijing* Festival and the Yarrabah Community Opera. Griffin Theatre Company: *Quack*, *Strange Attractor*, *Modern International Dead*, *Tiger Country*, *October*, *King Tide*. Sydney Theatre Company: *Travesties*, *Macbeth*. Ensemble Theatre Company: *The Little Dog Laughed*, *Ninety*, *Brooklyn Boy*, *Are you there*, *Derrida in Love*, *The Busy World is Hushed*. La Boite Theatre Company: *Amigos*. NORPA: *Mr BBQ*, *The Flood*, Queensland Music Festival: *Bobcat Dancing*, *Charters Towers the Musical*. Erth Visual and Physical: *Gondwana*, *Nargen and the Stars*.

Bernie has also previously served as touring technical manager and lighting designer for: Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company and Belvoir; and as Associate Lighting Designer to Nick Schlieper.

He is currently Technology and Content Principal for FPOV, a large international design consultancy.



NARELLE FRENCH

Piano

One of Australia's most respected and versatile pianists and musicians, Narelle French undertook studies at Sydney Conservatorium and Sydney University, and has been awarded the Dame Roma Mitchell Churchill Fellowship (2002) and Centenary Medal (2002).

Since relocating to Queensland in 1999, Narelle's roles at Opera Queensland (OQ) have included Head of Music (2001-present), Director of Young Artist Program (1999-2008 and 2020-present) and Chorus Director (since 2013). For OQ, she has conducted touring productions of *Così fan tutte* and *La Cenerentola*, and the world premiere of *Seeking True South*. Her roles have included conductor, pianist, arranger, librettist and translator, and she has co-created, performed and toured with productions, special events, concerts, education and workshop programs. As Chorus Master, she has led the Opera Queensland Chorus for over forty productions and concerts.

Narelle was for many years a senior member of the music staff at Opera Australia, where she fulfilled a number of roles including Head of Music Staff, Guest Chorus Master and Children's Chorus Master, harpsichord continuo, prompting (including Dame Joan Sutherland's farewell season of *Les Huguenots*), concert organisation and performance, working with eminent Australian and international directors, singers and Young Artists, and overseeing musical preparation for conductors such as Richard Bonyngé, Dame Jane Glover, Richard Hickox, Johannes Fritzsche and Carlo Felice Cillario, including travelling to the Edinburgh International Festival with Baz Luhrmann's award-winning production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She has adjudicated, given masterclasses or workshops, and worked as pianist with numerous arts and educational organisations including Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Brisbane Festival, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, University of Tasmania, University of Queensland and Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University.



LUKE VOLKER

Piano

Luke is a 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.

For Opera Queensland, Luke arranged, musically directed and performed in the touring productions *All Together Now!*, *Do We Need Another Hero*, and *Lady Sings The Maroons*. He also provided lyrics and arrangements for OQ's school shows *The Frog Prince*, *La Bohème*, *FiZZ!*, and *The Adventures of Figaro*.

Most recently, Luke was the local chorusmaster for the Brisbane season of Sting's *The Last Ship*. As music director, other credits include the *Hogwarts™* Frog Choir and *Universal Monsters Live Rock & Roll Show®* for Universal Studios Japan; *Tick, Tick... Boom!* for THAT Production Company; and national tours of *The Owl & The Pussycat*, *Lesbian Love Stories*, and *Babushka's Happily Ever After* (for which he won a Matilda Award). He is the composer of *There Once Was A Puffin* – an online mini-opera for children commissioned during 2020's lockdown period – and his arrangements have been performed at Adelaide Cabaret Festival, Sydney WorldPride, State Opera South Australia, New York's Green Room 42, and on P&O, Princess, and Carnival cruise lines.

Luke has played keyboards on various touring productions, performs regularly with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and has accompanied such celebrated artists as Caroline O'Connor, Lea Salonga, Faith Prince, Rhonda Burchmore, and Philip Quast.



FILIFE MANU

Tenor

New Zealand-raised tenor of Tongan heritage Filipe Manu is rapidly establishing himself as one of the most compelling tenors of his generation. In 2024, he became the first singer from the Pacific and Australasia to win the prestigious Tenor Viñas International Singing Competition. A graduate of the esteemed Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Manu has made significant debuts at Covent Garden, Wiener Staatsoper, Opéra National de Paris, and the Staatsoper Hamburg.

The 2025/26 season brings a new wave of international engagements, including Manu's eagerly anticipated debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona as Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*). He returns to the Wiener Staatsoper as Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) and travels with the company for his house debut at the Opéra de Monte-Carlo in the same role. Manu also made a highly awaited return to Opera Australia, making his role debut as Alfredo in *La traviata* in Melbourne, Regent Theatre. On the concert stage, he rejoins the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for his first-ever performances of Rossini's *Stabat Mater*.

Recent seasons have featured debuts as Fenton (*Falstaff*) at the Glyndebourne Summer Festival, Paris (*La Belle Hélène*) in Toulon, and Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*) with Scottish Opera. Other highlights include appearances as Eduardo in Thomas Adès' *The Exterminating Angel* at Opéra National de Paris, Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) at the Royal Opera House, and Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) at the Glyndebourne Autumn Festival. He has sung Ferrando for both Opera Australia and the Staatsoper Hamburg, as well as in Barrie Kosky's new production of *Così fan tutte* at Wiener Staatsoper. From 2021 to 2023, Manu was a member of the ensemble at Bühnen Bern, where his repertoire spanned Tamino, Ruodi (*Guillaume Tell*), Arbace (*Idomeneo*), Tebaldo (*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*), and Froh (*Das Rheingold*).

On the concert stage, Manu has performed at venues including the Edinburgh International Festival, Royal Albert Hall, and Wigmore Hall, collaborating with such leading conductors as Dalia Stasevska, Lothar Koenigs, Sir Antonio Pappano, and Mark Wigglesworth. He has also performed alongside Lisette Oropesa and Gerald Finley.

Manu is the recipient of the New Zealand Performer of the Year Award, the Dame Heather Begg Memorial Award, and first prizes in both the IFAC Handa Australian Singing Competition and the Lexus Song Quest.

His early development was supported by the Dame Malvina Major Young Artist Programme at New Zealand Opera. He is a former member of the New Zealand Opera School, the opera programme at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and the inaugural programmes of both the Dame Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation and Dame Malvina Major Foundation. As a Sir Edmund Hillary Scholar at the University of Waikato, he completed his Bachelor of Music and Postgraduate Diploma before earning a Master's degree from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Filipe Manu is increasingly recognised as a leading representative of Pacific and Australasian talent and music on the world's major opera stages.



JASON BARRY-SMITH
Baritone

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

Over the past three decades Jason's performed in or directed many of Opera Queensland's most successful productions and programs. He's also performed for the Brisbane Biennial, Opera Australia, Tokyo Arts Foundation, State Opera South Australia, New Zealand Opera, Brisbane Festival, and Essgee Entertainment; creating major roles in Siemiginowski's *Mimma*, Conyngham's *Electric Lenin*, and Richie's *Quartet*.

Since 2019, Jason's been the regular host of OQ's popular Sing Sing Sing events. He was a singer and compère for the inaugural Festival of Outback Opera in 2021, in 2022 toured with *The Sopranos* and created the role of Marchese d'Obigny in OQ's new production of *La traviata* at QPAC. 2023 saw him lead the community team for OQ's Festival of Outback Opera, and in 2024 he toured with *Do We Need Another Hero?*

Jason also directed the collaborative program Composed in Queensland, which saw him working with singer-songwriters Megan Washington, Sara Storer, Marcus Corowa and school students across Queensland creating original songs celebrating their regional communities.



ELIZABETH COOPER
Mezzo-soprano

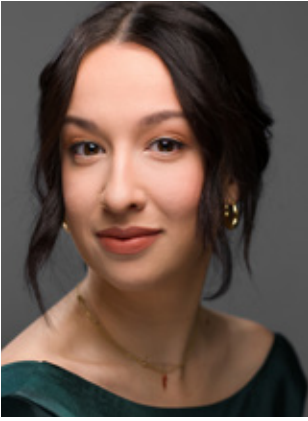
Brisbane born Elizabeth Cooper is an Australian mezzo-soprano who holds a Master of Music (Operatic Performance) and a Bachelor of Music Performance (Classical Voice) from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Elizabeth is a former Young Artist with Pacific Opera (2022-2023) and was awarded the 2024 Pacific Opera Studio International Scholarship Judges' Award in honour of Taryn Fiebig. Elizabeth performed several roles with Pacific Opera across her seasons as a Young Artist including Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*).

In 2024, she joined the Opera Australia Chorus for *Il tritico* and was delighted to spend 2025 on stage with the Opera Australia Chorus in performances of *Cendrillon*, *Candide*, *La Traviata*, *Rusalka*, *Carmen* and *La Bohème*.

Other performance highlights for Elizabeth include soloist work for Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Handel's *L'Allegro*, Vivaldi's *Magnificat* and *Gloria*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Fauré's *Requiem* and Handel's *Messiah*. Elizabeth has also performed Australian-grown contemporary works with Blush Opera for *Songs of the Sirens* and Lights On Theatre Company's production of *Pamphilia To Amphilanthus* at the Sydney Fringe Festival (2024).

Elizabeth joined Opera Queensland as a Young Artist for the 2025 and 2026 season. In 2026 performed *Petite Messe Solennelle* (Bel Canto) and understudied the title role in *La Cenerentola*.



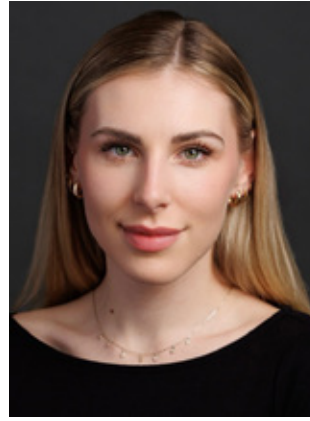
GABRIELLE DIAZ
Soprano

Brisbane soprano, Gabrielle Diaz, completed her Bachelor of Music in Performance at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music under the guidance of esteemed Lecturer in Voice and ANATS President, Shelli Hulcombe and is currently continuing her studies in a Masters of Music (Vocal Pedagogy), class of 2022.

Gabrielle made her professional debut with Opera Queensland in 2021 in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, later appearing in *La Traviata* and *The Enchanted Forest*. In 2022, she joined Opera Queensland's schools tour in collaboration with Shake & Stir Theatre Co., performing Mimì/Shez (*La Bohème*) and Juniper (*The Frog Prince*), and has since returned as Adina (*F!ZZ*) and Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*).

In 2025, Gabrielle joined the national touring cast of *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, with performances across Australia and at the Darwin Festival, and toured regional Queensland in *All Together Now!*, including the Cairns Festival. Other notable engagements include performances with The Little Red Company, The Seven Sopranos, Voxalis, Queensland Art Song Festival, Brisbane City Pops Orchestra, Hearts Aflame Tyalgum, Byron Music Society, and the Lismore Symphony Orchestra.

Later this year, Gabrielle is thrilled to join Opera Queensland and Queensland Theatre Company's production of *Into the Woods*.



TASHANA HARDY
Soprano

Australian soprano Tashana Hardy is rapidly establishing herself as a vibrant performer. Originally from Newcastle, she completed a Bachelor of Music in Classical Voice and a Postgraduate Certificate in Classical Performance at QCGU in 2025. Her professional debut came in 2024 when she performed as Hansel in Opera Queensland's touring production of *Hansel and Gretel*. She then performed in Stuart Maunder's *The Pirates of Penzance* at QPAC. In 2025, Tashana toured the role of Rosina in Opera Queensland's adaptation of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, titled *The Adventures of Figaro*. She also performed the roles of Iro in Elena Kats-Chernin's Australian premiere of *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Tyalgum Music Festival.

In 2025, Tashana was also awarded the Pat McKerrow Memorial Award at the Murwillumbah Music Festival. This year, Tashana will continue performing the role of Rosina with Opera Queensland in their regional touring production. She is also honoured to be the 2026 Margaret Schindler Vocal Scholarship recipient with Southern Cross Soloists and will be making appearances with the Mount Tamborine Orchestra at Southern Cross' Chamber Music festival, as well as solo recitals later this year.



LIAM JACKSON
Tenor

Liam is an emerging Australian tenor who recently completed his Bachelor of Music in Performance at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. Whilst at the Conservatorium, his notable roles included John Styx in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, understudying Rinuccio in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, and understudying Lord Tolloller in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Iolanthe*.

His professional credits include Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Kirkman & Scott Productions), Rudolph in Schubert's *Der häusliche Krieg* (Lisa Gasteen National Opera Program), a member of the ensemble in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Prospero Arts) and The Soldier in Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*. He also worked with The Australian Ballet in their 2023 production of *Swan Lake* as a supernumerary. This is Liam's debut with Opera Queensland and Shake & Stir and he is very excited to be taking on the role of Al in *The Adventures of Figaro*.



LEANNE KENNEALLY
Soprano

Leanne Kenneally burst onto the opera scene in 1996, making her debut as Pamina with Opera Australia and in the same year as Donna Anna with Opera Queensland. Since then, she has performed with all of Australia's leading opera companies, appeared at international festivals from New Zealand, Australia to Bangkok, and worked with Cologne Opera in Germany.

A graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, Leanne won the ABC Young Performers Award (Vocal) while still a student and went on to receive Opera Foundation Australia's prestigious German Operatic Award.

On stage, her roles have ranged from the lyric charm of Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Juliette (*Roméo et Juliette*) and Mimì (*La bohème*), to the elegance of the Countess (*Le nozze di Figaro*), the brilliance of Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), and contemporary works such as Richard Mills' *The Love of the Nightingale* and Golijov's *Ainadamar*.

Equally in demand on the concert stage, Leanne has performed with all major Australian symphony orchestras in works ranging from Bach's Mass in B minor and Handel's *Messiah* to Mahler's symphonies, Brahms' *Requiem*, Britten's *Les Illuminations* and Rachmaninov's *The Bells*. Leanne performed with Australian Dance Collective, ADC, on *Relic*.

Since 2017, she has combined performing with teaching, mentoring young singers at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Somerville House, Clayfield College, and the Queensland College of Music.

Her recordings include Venus in Saint-Saëns' *Hélène* (Melba Recordings) and *Mythical Creatures* by Paul Kopetz (Navona, 2023).



FREDDIE KLEIN
Baritone

Freddie Klein is an emerging classical tenor originally from Canberra, Australia. A graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University with 1st Class Honours, Freddie has found success in a variety of professional and amateur productions and performances. Freddie is currently appearing as Figaro in Opera Queensland's adapted touring production of *The Adventures of Figaro* (2025-26). Previous engagements include Prospero Arts' production of *The Pirates of Penzance* and as Acis in *Acis and Galatea* for Springboard Opera. With QCGU, Freddie sang a variety of roles in staged productions. These included Eurimaco (Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* re-orchestrated by Elena Kats-Chernin), Gherardo (Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*), Snout the Tinker (Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Mercury/ Cegeste (*Underworld*).

In recital, Freddie has produced and performed for Voxalis Opera – *Golden Age* and *Homecoming – An Opera Gala* at the Snow Concert Hall, Canberra. Freddie has also appeared with the Tyalgum Classical Music Festival, The Queensland Choir and at St John's College, University of Queensland.



LACHLANN LAWTON
Baritone

As a multi award winning Australian/British lyric baritone, Lachlann Lawton's work spans across opera, musical theatre and contemporary repertoire. Known for his rich tone and emotionally grounded performances, Lachlann brings his operatic training to a wide range of storytelling styles.

He was the recipient of the Glyndebourne Festival Prize and Armstrong-Martin Scholarship in the 2025 MOST Opera Awards, and is a two-time Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngel Bel Canto Award finalist, receiving the John Wegner Award.

Lachlann was a member of the Young Artist Program at Opera Queensland (2024-2025). He is a proud recipient of the Roberts Emerging Artist Fund (2023, 2026) at West Australian Opera, where he is a former Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist (2020-2021).

He completed a Masters of Music at the Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester), and a Graduate Diploma and Bachelor of Music at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA).

Recent engagements for Opera Queensland include Luther Harlow (*In A Grove*), Marcello cover (*La Bohème*), The Sailor and Aeneas understudy (*Dido and Aeneas*), and Guglielmo cover (*Così fan tutte*). Other recent performances include The Priest in Philip Glass's opera *The Trial* for Perth Festival, and Anthony Hope (*Sweeney Todd*) for Victorian Opera and Dubai Opera.



JAMES ROSER
Baritone

Australian-born baritone James Roser initially began a career as an environmental scientist, having completed a Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) at the University of NSW, before beginning musical studies. He was a recipient of a number of major singing awards in Australia, including the Mietta Song Recital Award, Vienna State Opera Award and Britten-Pears Young Artist Award, was a young artist with Pacific Opera and has performed with the Vienna State Opera, Victorian Opera, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Tiroler Festspiele Erl, Beijing Music Festival, Shanghai International Arts Festival, Opéra de Baugé and State Opera South Australia.

Operatic roles include Rigoletto, Germont (*La Traviata*), Amfortas (*Parsifal*), Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Gunther (*Götterdämmerung*), Don Pizarro (*Fidelio*), Wotan (*Das Rheingold*), Don Giovanni, Il Conte (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Allazim (*Zaide*), Wiedhopf (*Die Vögel*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Owen Wingrave, Escamillo (*Carmen*), Peter (*Hänsel und Gretel*). His performance as Rigoletto with the Tiroler Festspiele was televised on Servus TV and that of Wiedhopf in *Die Vögel* was televised on ORF.

James has performed in recitals across Europe, as well as in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, performing for Artsong NSW, Chamber Music Australia, Oxford Lieder Festival, Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme, Franz Schubert Institut, Rainhill Music Festival, Gesellschaft für Musiktheater Wien, has appeared as a soloist with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and has been broadcast a number of times in Australia on 2MBS-FM, 3MBS-FM and ABC Classic FM, as well as ORF and Servus TV in Austria and Germany.



AYLISH RYAN
Mezzo-Soprano

Hailing from Toowoomba, mezzo-soprano Aylish Ryan has recently completed a Bachelor of Music at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU), graduating with distinction.

During her studies, Aylish was the recipient of the prestigious Opera Australia Regional Vocal Scholarship (2019), the Victoria Chalmers Education Award, the Elizabeth Muir Memorial Award, and the Sir Mostyn Hanger Opera Prize, and was an artist in the Lisa Gasteen National Opera Program (2023-2024). She performed the role of Orfeo in *Orpheus!* and *Underworld: A Journey to Hell and Back* (2023), the latter with accomplished director and playwright Michael Gow and Maestro Johannes Fritzsich. She worked with director Stuart Maunder as Leila in *Iolanthe*, repeating the role in the Lisa Gasteen National Opera Program's Opera Scenes (2024) under the baton of Felice Venanzoni.

Also in 2024, Aylish performed the role of Ruth in Kirkman and Scott's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, and worked with director Lindy Hume and Maestro Johannes Fritzsich as La Maestra delle Novizie in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* (QCGU).

In 2025 she joined Opera Queensland's Young Artist Program and recently travelled to Italy to take part in the Andrea Bocelli Foundation Masterclass di Alto Perfezionamento in Canto Lirico (ABF Masterclass of High Specialisation in Opera Singing).



KATIE STENZEL

Soprano

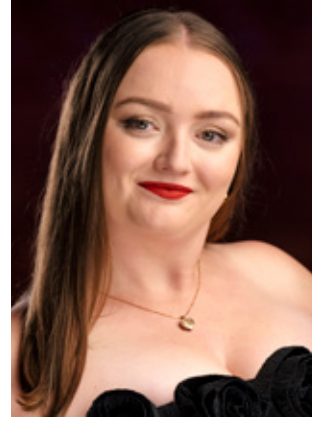
Katie Stenzel is a dynamic, coloratura soprano. Described by Limelight Magazine as possessing “a powerful and perfectly controlled upper range”, she has established herself as an engaging and multi-faceted performer.

Since completing her Master of Music Studies at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Katie has performed across Australia and internationally with companies including State Opera South Australia, Opera Queensland, Opera Australia, Brisbane Festival, The Adelaide Fringe Festival, and the Taipei Drama Festival in Taiwan.

Operatic roles have included Queen of the Night in *The Sopranos*, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Lucy in *The Telephone*, Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Niece 1 in *Peter Grimes*, Zorah in *Ruddigore* and the creation of the title role in the new Australian work, *Loretta*. Cover roles include Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Euridice and Amore in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Kumudha in *A Flowering Tree*, Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*, Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and Cunegonde in *Candide*.

Notable concert works include Symphony No. 4 (Mahler), *Messiah* (Handel), *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* (Handel), *Carmina Burana* (Orff), *African Sanctus* (Fanshawe), *The Mysteries of the Macabre* (Ligeti), and *Oratorio de Noël* (Saint-Saëns).

Katie’s presenting work spans from the remote stages of the Festival of Outback Opera to the boards of the Sydney Opera House and beyond.



MADELEINE STEPHENS

Soprano

Madeleine is a 24-year-old soprano, actor, and director, holding a Bachelor of Music (Honours) from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), where she studied with Emma Matthews. She also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Studies of music and drama from Queensland University of Technology.

In 2018, Madeleine attended Opera Australia’s Regional Scholarship Program in Sydney, where she studied under the guidance of Director of Music, Tahu Matheson and former Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini.

Madeleine has performed in *Ruddigore* or *The Witch’s Curse!* (2018) with Opera Queensland’s regional production and *Dido and Aeneas* (2018) with Queensland Theatre’s youth project.

During her studies at WAAPA, Madeleine performed in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *The Pirates of Penzance* as Edith, and played Mother (Gertrude) in *Hansel and Gretel*. In her graduating year, she was soprano soloist in Schubert’s Mass in G at St Mary’s Cathedral with the WAAPA Chorale.

Completing her studies, she was awarded third place of the 2022 West Australian Opera Lovers Aria Prize and was a recipient of the Ian Potter Cultural Trust Emerging Artist Grant. Funded by the Ian Potter Cultural Trust, Madeleine attended the 2023 Dorset Opera Summer School and worked under the guidance of esteemed Artistic Director Roderick Kennedy, with *Le nozze di Figaro*, directed by Paul Carr, and *Le Roi de Lahore*, directed by Ella Marchment.

Moving to Brisbane in 2024, Madeleine is currently a cantor at the Cathedral of St Stephen, a stage director with Springboard Opera, and was an emerging director in La Boite Theatre’s 2024 Assembly Program.

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DARK SKY SERENADE

THU 21 MAY, 2026

PROGRAM

Si può
from *I pagliacci* Ruggiero Leoncavallo

Saper vorreste
from *Un ballo in maschera* Giuseppe Verdi

Lunge da lei ... Dei miei bollenti spiriti
from *La traviata* Giuseppe Verdi

Ah, scostati! ... Smanie implacabili
from *Così fan tutte* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Questo amor
from *Edgar* Giacomo Puccini

Vado incontro
from *Mitridate* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Habanera
from *Carmen* Georges Bizet

Act 1 Quintet
Act 2 Chorus "Es siegte die Starke"
from *Die Zauberflöte* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Quel guardo il cavaliere
from *Don Pasquale* Gaetano Donizetti

Una furtiva lagrima
from *L'elisir d'amore* Gaetano Donizetti

Una voce poco fa
from *Il barbiere di Siviglia* Gioachino Rossini

Crudel, perchè finora
from *Le nozze di Figaro* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Some enchanted evening
from *South Pacific* Rodgers and Hammerstein

New Year's Eve Quartet
from *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* Mills and Goldsworthy after Lawler

Dark Sky Soundscape
World premiere, commissioned by
Opera Queensland K Mak

Introduction & Humming Chorus
from *Madama Butterfly* Giacomo Puccini

Waltzing Matilda
Traditional
Arr. Richard Mills

SINGING IN THE NIGHT

SAT 23 MAY, 2026

PROGRAM

Se ii tuo duol
from *Idomeneo* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Bell Chours
from *I pagliacci* Ruggero Leoncavallo

Stridono lassù
from *I pagliacci* Ruggero Leoncavallo

Ah! lève-toi, soleil
Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle
from *Roméo et Juliette* Charles Gounod

Pif, paf, pouf
from *La grande duchesse de Gérolstein* Jacques Offenbach

Au mont Ida
from *La belle Hélène* Jacques Offenbach

Act 2 Finale
from *Orphée aux enfers* Jacques Offenbach

Dido's Lament
With drooping wings
from *Dido and Aeneas* Henry Purcell

Tutte nel cor vi sento
Zeffiretti lusinghieri
Placido è il mar
from *Idomeneo* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Je crois entendre encore
Au fond du temple saint
from *Les pêcheurs de perles* Georges Bizet

Ladies of Brisbane/Click go the shears
Traditional
Arr. Richard Mills

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PRODUCTION CREDITS

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Production Coordinator Rhi Booth

Learning, Regional and Community Project Manager Mak Purdy

Learning, Regional and Community Coordinator Cameron Rollo

DARK SKY SERENADE & SINGING IN THE NIGHT

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Production Stage Manager Ben Shaw

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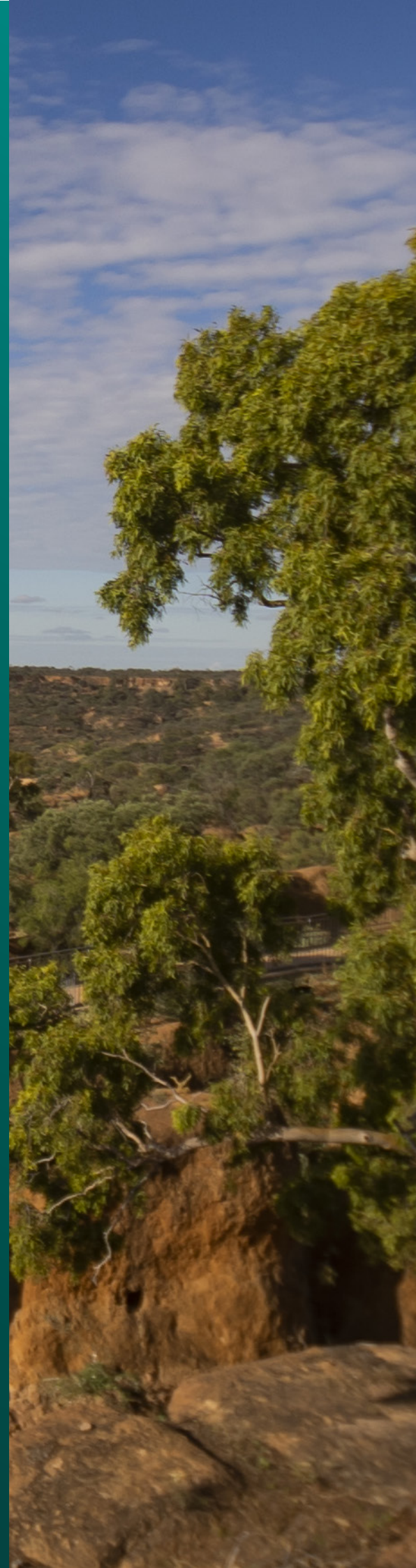
Production Manager Rhi Booth

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Tom Hawker, Peter Marsden, Linus Monsour

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