

Opera Australia announces 2012 Sydney Season

Big, Bold and Beautiful – Lyndon Terracini’s vision for 21st-century opera



Opera Australia’s Artistic Director, Lyndon Terracini, has announced details of the national opera company’s 2012 Season – his inaugural program as Artistic Director. It is stamped with his vision for a changing opera company that is more in tune with 21st-century Australia. His vision is one of ‘opera events’: Broadway-style music theatre, family-friendly opera experiences and spectacular new productions. At the other end of the spectrum are projects that take opera to the people: Community Choirs, wide national touring, and community-specific collaborations.

For the first time in many years, Opera Australia will present a mainstage season in Brisbane, in addition to Sydney and Melbourne, with a total of fourteen operas across three east coast cities including seven new productions plus a touring Broadway musical. In celebration of this new expansion, all three cities will experience one of the highlights of the 2012 Season: the spectacular Julie Taymor production of *The Magic Flute*. It’s an energetic and bold vision for the national company, as it moves into a new era of opera to inspire Australian audiences across the country.

“**Big. Bold. Beautiful.** It says it all,” says Terracini. “**Big**, because with opera we are dealing with big ideas, intense emotions, and larger-than-life characters. **Bold**, because here in Australia, we have a unique opportunity to create an opera company that is different from any other. And **beautiful**, because in everything we do we are responding to the incredible beauty of this art form.”

A Summer of Mozart: The 2012 Sydney Season opens with a new production of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, directed by Julie Taymor (director of Broadway sensation *The Lion King*). It features handmade silk puppets, special effects, spectacular costumes and a new English translation. In the spirit of Mozart’s original, it is aimed at a family audience, with reduced ticket prices for selected performances in the school holidays. The production is part of a composer-led festival of three Mozart operas. The summer season also includes Puccini’s epic final opera, *Turandot*.

“Composer Festivals are a great way to contextualise the experience, to really get under the skin of a composer,” says Terracini. “It is also nice to remember that this is how our national opera company started out, with a tour of four Mozart operas, and to look at how far we have come! All three productions are **in English**, all three are **modern takes on classical works**, and yet all three have very **different aesthetics**. It will be fascinating to compare.”

The Mozart Festival comprises Taymor’s *The Magic Flute*, Jim Sharman’s re-studied 2008 production of *Così fan tutte* and the long-awaited new production of *The Marriage of Figaro* directed by Benedict Andrews. Arguably the most cutting-edge director working in theatre today, Andrews conjures a contemporary *Figaro* for a contemporary Australia, sung in English and featuring charismatic Joshua Bloom in the title role, fresh from his Met debut.

Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour: La Traviata: In March 2012 Sydney will come alive to the sights and sounds of the inaugural **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour**. Emma Matthews and Rachele Durkin alternate as the tragic heroine of **Verdi’s La Traviata**, while international tenors Gianluca Terranova and Ji-Min Park alternate as Alfredo. It is a new production designed by **Brian Thomson** and directed by **Francesca Zambello**. Performed on a purpose-built stage out on the water of Sydney Harbour and with the city skyline as backdrop, it will be a star-studded event held for three weeks. This will be Opera Australia’s most ambitious production yet, featuring a magnificent nine metre **chandelier**, special effects and **fireworks**.

A Winter of Firsts: The 2012 Winter Season is framed by two key works of the twentieth century, Erich Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* and Richard Strauss's *Salome*, in new productions by Bruce Beresford and Gale Edwards, and both starring Cheryl Barker.

There are two more new productions. First, a new *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Emma Matthews, created as a co-production between Houston Grand Opera and La Fenice, Venice. And finally, the Lincoln Center Theater production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Broadway musical, *South Pacific*, starring Teddy Tahu Rhodes. The season also features revivals of *The Pearlfishers*, *Aida* and *Madama Butterfly*.

Digital technology for 21st-century opera: In a first for Australian theatre, Erich Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* will feature three-dimensional holograms and cinema-style surround sound. The Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra will be playing live in The Studio of the Opera House for each performance to allow the stage to be extended forward into the theatre. The production also features innovative special effects. Using 3D holograms, leading soprano Cheryl Barker will play two roles on stage simultaneously. "In the twenty-first century we need to use all the technology at our disposal to create stunning theatre," says Terracini.

South Pacific - a Broadway musical tours nationally: Teddy Tahu Rhodes stars in the award-winning Lincoln Center Theatre's production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific*, directed by Bartlett Sher. It runs for four weeks at the Sydney Opera House before embarking on a national tour (further details will be announced later in 2011). "*South Pacific* is a ground-breaking musical. It is full of romantic and uplifting show-stoppers, but it also confronts the issues of mixed-race marriage, prejudice and tolerance," says Terracini. "*South Pacific* is a work which resonates with modern Australia in many ways. It is about our issues and our part of the world."

Michael Gow creates a new Don for Oz Opera : Oz Opera, the touring arm of Opera Australia, gets a makeover with a new production of Mozart's 'perfect' opera, *Don Giovanni*, in 2012. Directed by Australian theatre legend Michael Gow, *Don Giovanni* will bring a fresh and polished production to regional Australian audiences. "Michael Gow is one of the most exciting directors in Australia today," says Terracini. "We're thrilled to have him working with us to create a tailor-made *Don Giovanni* that speaks to regional Australia."

Lyndon Terracini concludes: "The 2012 season is about articulating what an opera company can be within an Australian context for the twenty-first century. This is a time of great opportunity, a time for asking 'what if?' and 'why not?' It is an exciting time for opera in Australia."

Adrian Collette, chief executive, Opera Australia says "Welcome to OA's first program of opera under Lyndon's artistic direction, with all its abundant energy and variety. I think this is a program that will inspire the most ardent opera fan while ensuring that our national company also engages with the broadest possible audience. I trust you enjoy the journey."

Opera Australia's 2012 Sydney Season at a glance:

- Fourteen operas, and seven new productions including *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Salome*
- A new series of composer-led festivals begins with 'A Summer of Mozart' including Julie Taymor's *The Magic Flute* and Benedict Andrews' *The Marriage of Figaro*
- Big, bold, beautiful: the inaugural **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata***
- ***South Pacific*** – a new Broadway musical touring nationally
- Technological developments suggest new ways to stage opera: holograms feature in ***Die tote Stadt***
- New storytelling – Michael Gow's ***Don Giovanni*** for Oz Opera

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Images: Lyndon Terracini; *The Magic Flute* Metropolitan Opera production photo © Cory Weaver/ Metropolitan Opera 2009; *South Pacific* poster image; *Madama Butterfly* Opera Australia 2010@Branco Gaica; *Salome* Opera Australia 2010

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2012 National Summary

Ghosts, puppets, wigs, frocks, floating stages and creative powerhouses ...

Lyndon Terracini's inaugural artistic program ushers in a new era for Opera Australia in 2012. The stellar mainstage season features fourteen operas, of which six are new productions, plus one new Broadway musical. The mainstage season expands in 2012 to take in Brisbane as well as Sydney and Melbourne. **Big, bold, beautiful!**



Jonas Kaufmann as Tamino in a scene from Act I of Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte." Photo: Ken Howard/Metropolitan Opera

SYDNEY SUMMER 2012: A SUMMER OF SPECTACLE

The 2012 Season opens in Sydney with a new production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, directed by **Julie Taymor**, director of Broadway sensation *The Lion King*. The production features a young Australian cast including rising stars Emma Pearson as Queen of the Night and Operatunity Oz prizewinner David Parkin as Sarastro. Talented newcomer Nicole Car alternates with Hyeseoung Kwon in the role of Pamina, while Andrew Brunsdon is Tamino and Andrew Jones makes his role debut as Papageno. With **glorious puppets**, special effects, spectacular costumes and a new English translation, it is aimed at a **family audience**, with reduced ticket prices for selected performances in the school holidays.

The Magic Flute opens at the Sydney Opera House on 6 January 2012.

Puccini's magnificent final opera, *Turandot*, returns to the Sydney Opera House with American soprano Susan Foster making her Australian debut in the title role, sharing the role with Anke Höppner. Rosario La Spina plays Calaf, while young Italian soprano Daria Masiero comes to Australia for the first time to appear as Liù, sharing the role with Hyeseoung Kwon. Arvo Volmer conducts this classic production created by Graeme Murphy.

Turandot opens at the Sydney Opera House on 17 January 2012.

Benedict Andrews makes his directorial debut with the Company with his long-awaited new production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. This modern take on Mozart's revolutionary classic features an ingenious shifting set designed by Ralph Myers, with costumes by Alice Babidge. It stars Russian soprano Elvira Fatykhova as the Countess, with Michael Lewis as the Count, and Joshua Bloom and Taryn Fiebig as Figaro and Susanna. Simon Hewett conducts.

The Marriage of Figaro opens at the Sydney Opera House on 6 February 2012.

Completing the summer trio of Mozart operas is the romantic comedy *Così fan tutte*. Jim Sharman's ebullient production from 2009 features Gabriela Tylesova's wacky costumes and visual special effects by Mic Gruchy. A quartet of young singers take the central roles: Sharon Prero is Fiordiligi, Sian Pendry is Dorabella, Stephen Smith is Ferrando and Samuel Dundas is Guglielmo. Meanwhile, Australian conductor Benjamin Northey returns to conduct.

Così fan tutte opens at the Sydney Opera House on 8 March 2012.

HANDA OPERA ON SYDNEY HARBOUR: LA TRAVIATA

In March 2012 audiences from across the globe will flock to Sydney as it comes alive to the sights and sounds of the inaugural **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour: La Traviata**. Months in the making, the outdoor staging of Verdi's devastatingly romantic story *La Traviata* is directed by Francesca Zambello and plays out on a **floating stage**, against a stunning backdrop of the Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House. The new production features magnificent costumes and visuals, including a nine metre chandelier, digitally enhanced special effects and **fireworks**. It stars Emma Matthews/Rachelle Durkin and Gianluca Terranova/Ji-Min Park.

HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: La Traviata plays from 24 March until 15 April 2012.

For ticketing details and times, go to www.operaonsydneyharbour.com.au

MELBOURNE AUTUMN 2012: LOVE, LAUGHS AND LONGING



Melbourne’s Autumn Season of Opera opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne with all the splendour of grand opera when Puccini’s *Turandot* returns. Elizabeth Connell appears in the title role, with Rosario La Spina and Carlo Barricelli as Calaf and Hyeseoung Kwon as the slave-girl Liù. Italian Puccini-specialist Andrea Licata returns to conduct this much-loved production, which features epic costumes and bold choreography, created by director Graeme Murphy and designer Kristian Fredrikson.

Turandot opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne on 10 April 2012.

The New York Metropolitan Opera’s smash hit production of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, directed by Julie Taymor, (director of Broadway sensation *The Lion King*), comes to Melbourne with an exciting young Australian cast. Taryn Fiebig plays the lovely Pamina, while Andrew Brunsdon is Prince Tamino, Andrew Jones is Papageno and Lorina Gore is the Queen of the Night. Paul Kildea conducts this family-friendly production, which features puppets, special effects and a lively English translation.

The Magic Flute opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne on 21 April 2012.

José Carbó stars as Figaro in Rossini’s fast-moving romantic comedy *The Barber of Seville*. Elijah Moshinsky’s much-loved production transports Figaro and his friends to the world of 1920s slapstick movies, complete with comical stunts and chases. This favourite in the repertoire features Dominica Matthews as Rosina, John Longmuir as Count Almaviva and Andrew Moran as Dr Bartolo, with Maurizio Barbacini conducting.

The Barber of Seville opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne on 30 April 2012.

A new production of Lehár’s popular operetta, *The Merry Widow*, brings top hats and tails, frocks and fans to the stage of the State Theatre. This lively new production is directed by theatre legend Giles Havergal and stars Amelia Farrugia as the merry widow Hanna with David Hobson as her suitor Danilo. Andrew Greene conducts this delicious night of song and dance, with choreography by Stuart Hopps.

The Merry Widow opens at the Arts Centre , Melbourne on 16 May 2012.

BRISBANE 2012: MAGICAL NIGHTS, DREAMY VISIONS

Opera Australia presents two operas at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in May-June 2012.



First is the new production of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, directed by Julie Taymor, director of Broadway sensation *The Lion King*. This is a fast-moving, family-friendly production which features puppets, special effects and a lively English translation. Taryn Fiebig plays the lovely Pamina, while Andrew Brunsdon is Prince Tamino and Andrew Jones is Papageno the birdman. The role of the scary Queen of the Night will showcase young soprano Milica Ilic and Operatunity Oz prizewinner David Parkin is Sarastro.

The Magic Flute opens at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre on 26 May 2012

Opera Australia’s production of Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is an all-time classic. Created by Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin and set in British India, this iconic production comes to Brisbane for the first time. Counter tenor Tobias Cole and soprano Lorina Gore lead a strong cast including Jacqueline Dark as Hippolyta and Conal Coad as Bottom. Puck is played by legend of the theatre, Tyler Coppin.

A Midsummer Night’s Dream opens at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre on 2 June 2012

SYDNEY WINTER 2012: OPERA FOR NOW

The 2012 Winter Season is framed by two key works of the twentieth century, **Erich Korngold's *Die tote Stadt*** and **Richard Strauss's *Salome***, in new productions by **Bruce Beresford** and **Gale Edwards**, and both starring **Cheryl Barker**. It also features four classics of the operatic repertoire and a new production of the Broadway musical *South Pacific*.

Erich Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* receives its **Australian premiere** when Bruce Beresford directs a new production at Sydney Opera House. Korngold's final opera, written 1917-1919, tells the story of a man who falls for a girl who is the image of his dead wife. **Christian Badea** conducts a huge orchestra, playing in Opera House Studio, while in the Opera Theatre **Cheryl Barker**, **José Carbó** and German heldentenor **Stefan Vinke** bring the opera to life. In a first for opera in Australia, this production features **three-dimensional holograms** and **cinema-style surround sound**.

Die tote Stadt opens at the Sydney Opera House on 30 June 2012



Australian soprano **Jessica Pratt** makes her company debut in the role of Léïla in Bizet's *The Pearlfishers*. She is joined by Henry Choo and Andrew Jones who sing the opera's legendary duet, 'In the depths of the temple'. Guillaume Tourniaire conducts Bizet's colourful score for this revival of Ann-Margret Pettersson's fascinating production, a re-imagining of Ancient Ceylon, complete with gold iconography and tribal dances. **The Pearlfishers opens at the Sydney Opera House on 4 July 2012.**

Graeme Murphy's magnificent production of Verdi's grand opera, *Aida*, returns to Sydney this winter with Italian star soprano Norma Fantini sharing the title role with Jacqueline Mabardi. Featuring spectacular costumes and sets, dancing and rousing choruses, this production toured Australia to great acclaim in 2009. It returns with Arvo Volmer conducting and a cast which includes real-life husband and wife team Milijana Nikolic as Amneris and Rosario La Spina as Aida's lover Radamès.

Aida opens at the Sydney Opera House on 17 July 2012.

BROADWAY MUSICAL: SOUTH PACIFIC

Teddy Tahu Rhodes stars in the award-winning Lincoln Center Theatre production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific*, directed by Bartlett Sher. It runs for four weeks at the Sydney Opera House before embarking on a national tour. "*South Pacific* is a ground-breaking musical. It is full of romantic and uplifting show-stoppers, but it also confronts the issues of mixed-race marriage, prejudice and tolerance," says Opera Australia artistic director Lyndon Terracini. "*South Pacific* is a work which resonates with modern Australia in many ways. It is about our issues and our part of the world."

South Pacific plays at the Sydney Opera House from 11 August – 9 September 2012.

Details of the full national tour will be announced later in 2011.

One of the world's favourite operas, *Madama Butterfly*, is back to delight opera lovers old and new. Japanese soprano **Hiromi Omura** wowed critics in this classic production when it played in Canada. She now brings her beautiful portrayal of the young Japanese bride to Sydney. She shares the role with charming Antoinette Halloran. Tenor **James Egglestone** makes his debut in the role of Pinkerton, and **Michael Lewis** as Sharpless. Ryusuke Numajiri conducts Puccini's irresistibly moving score.

Madama Butterfly opens at Sydney Opera House on 20 September 2012.

Emma Matthews heads an international cast in a new production of Donizetti's bel canto classic, *Lucia di Lammermoor*. This co-production with Houston Grand Opera and La Fenice, Venice, is directed by John Doyle and features atmospheric sets and period costumes. Emma Matthews takes on the vocal and dramatic challenge of one of the great bel canto roles, Lucia, while American tenor **James Valenti**, in his company debut, plays Edgardo with Italian tenor **Giorgio Caoduro** as Enrico.

Lucia di Lammermoor opens at Sydney Opera House on 28 September 2012.

A new production of Richard Strauss's beautiful and outrageous *Salome* brings the winter season to a close. **Gale Edwards** directs this biblical tale of sex and death, and **Cheryl Barker** leads an outstanding cast, including **John Wegner** as Jokanaan and, in the role of Herod, Australian tenor **John Pickering** making his company debut. **Johannes Fritzsich** conducts and **Brian Thomson**, who created the look for 2011's smash hit *La bohème*, is set designer.

Salome opens at Sydney Opera House on 12 October 2012.

MELBOURNE SPRING: PASSIONATE

Japanese soprano **Hiromi Omura** brings her beautiful portrayal of one of opera's great heroines to Melbourne when Opera Australia's classic production of *Madama Butterfly* returns. Moffatt Oxenbould's legendary production, all screens and silk and delicate moves, complements Puccini's heart-breaking music in the touching East meets West story. James Egglestone plays Pinkerton, Sian Pendry is Suzuki and Barry Ryan is Sharpless and Giovanni Reggioli conducts.

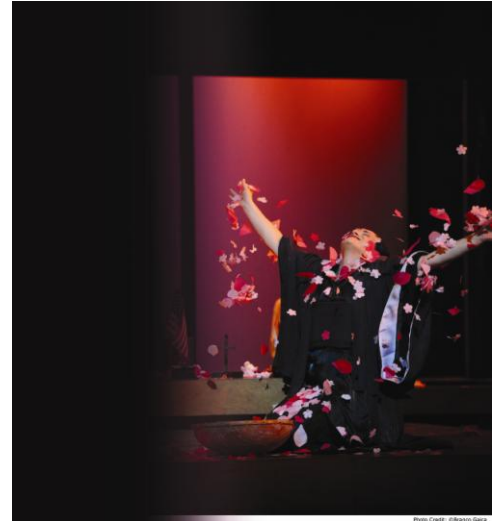
Madama Butterfly opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne on 14 November 2012.

A new production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, starring Australia bel canto star **Emma Matthews**, comes to Melbourne for its premiere season. **John Doyle** directs this stormy Scottish tale, with **Aldo Di Toro** as Lucia's love Edgardo and **Giorgio Caoduro** as her brother Enrico. **David Parkin** makes his role debut as Raimondo, **Stephen Smith** is the ill-fated bridegroom Arturo and **Guillaume Tourniaire** conducts Donizetti's spectacular score.

Lucia di Lammermoor opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne on 19 November 2012.

Cheryl Barker leads an outstanding ensemble cast in a new production of Richard Strauss's beautiful and outrageous *Salome*, directed by **Gale Edwards** with sets designed by **Brian Thomson**. She is joined in this biblical tale of sex and death by **Peter Coleman-Wright** as Jokanaan, **Jacqueline Dark** as Herodias and, in the role of Herod, Australian tenor **John Pickering**. **Simon Hewett** returns to Australia to conduct the ensemble.

Salome opens at the Arts Centre, Melbourne on 1 December 2012.



2012 GUEST ARTISTS: International Artists

Russian soprano **Elvira Fatykhova** (right) has thrilled Australian audiences as Violetta in *La Traviata* and in the title roles of *Manon* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. In 2012 she makes her role debut as the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*. She also appears in the 2011/12 New Year's Eve Gala. MORE: www.elvirafatykhova.com



Susan Foster is a rising star in the dramatic soprano repertoire. She has just sung the title role in *Turandot* with San Francisco Opera, where she is also covering Brunnhilde in their *Ring Cycle*. Born in Arizona, she trained at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and is recipient of many awards including the Florida Grand Opera Olsen Award. For her Opera Australia debut she will bring her celebrated performance as *Turandot*. MORE: www.susanfostersoprano.com

Anke Höppner was born in Germany and performs regularly with Australian opera companies including Opera Australia with whom she recently performed the title role in *The Girl of the Golden West*. She is a multi-award winner, holding the first prize in the Hanns-Eisler Liederwettbewerb, the Bayreuth Stipendium and a Helpmann Award. MORE: <http://www.patricktogher.com/artist/soprano/Anke-H%C3%B6ppner/4zgt1d1brp/>

Hyeseoung Kwon graduated from Seoul's Han-Yang University 1995 and then spent several years in Italy. She moved to Australia and became a member of Opera Queensland's Young Artist Program and subsequently joined Opera Australia's Young Artist Program in 2005 and 2006. Hyeseoung was nominated for Helpmann and Greenroom Awards in 2008 and 2009. In 2012 she performs the role of Liù in *Turandot*. MORE: <http://hyeseoungkwon.com/>

Daria Masiero may be young, but she is considered one of Italy's leading 'donne di Puccini'. She has performed with Placido Domingo and José Carreras and has appeared at La Scala, Milan and numerous other opera houses from Turin, Genoa, Nice, to Beijing and Tokyo. For her Sydney debut she sings Liù in *Turandot*. MORE: www.dariamasio.com

Hiromi Omura is no stranger to the role of Madama Butterfly: she has performed it all over the world, from Canada to Poland to Tokyo and, most recently, at the Savonlinna Opera Festival in Finland. Now she brings this role to Sydney.

Gianluca Terranova has sung many of the great roles of Italian opera in opera houses around Italy. He made his US debut last year as the Duke in *Rigoletto* for Los Angeles Opera. He now makes his Australian debut as Alfredo in the inaugural HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata*. MORE: www.puntoopera.it/artisti/biografia/gianluca_terranova/51

James Valenti made a stellar debut at Metropolitan Opera in 2010, singing Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata* opposite Angela Gheorghiu. The same year he won the Richard Tucker Award, marking him as an American singer on the brink of an international career. For his Sydney debut he plays Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. MORE: www.jamesvalenti.com/biography.asp

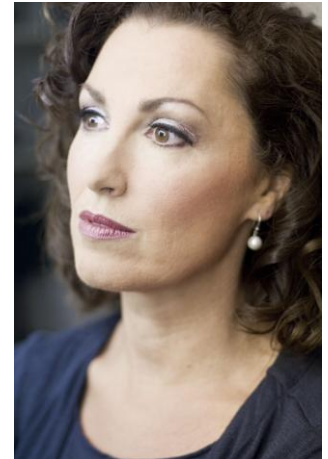
Ji-Min Park was born in South Korea and graduated from the Jette Parker Young Artists Program at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 2010. He has gone on to sing many roles with the Royal Opera, including Alfredo (*Traviata*), Rodolfo (*Bohème*) and Des Grieux (*Manon Lescaut*). He made his Australian debut as Rodolfo in *La bohème* in March 2011, and returns to sing Alfredo in 2012 in HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata*. MORE: www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our_artists/principal_artists/ji_min_park

Giorgio Caoduro is barely 30, but he is already in demand at many of the world's major opera houses, singing roles like Mozart's Figaro, Dandini, Belcore and more at La Scala, Paris, London and Berlin. Australian audiences loved him as Rossini's crazy barber Figaro in 2011. Now he returns as the tyrannical brother, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. MORE: www.giorgiocaoduro.com

Stefan Vinke is a rare thing amongst singers: a true *heldentenor*, possessed of a bright, agile and powerful voice needed to sing heroic roles such as Siegfried in Wagner's *The Ring Cycle*. He is currently in great demand all over Europe to sing roles including Parsifal (Leipzig), Siegfried (Berlin, La Fenice) and Lohengrin (Toulon). He is one of the few tenors in the world today who can sing the role of Paul in *Die tote Stadt*. This will be his Australian debut. MORE: www.philharmonia.co.uk/mahler/artists/stefan_vinke

One of the finest sopranos performing on Australian and international stages, **Cheryl Barker's** (right) most recent successes include Emilia Marty for the Netherlands Opera and Madama Butterfly for the Paris Opera. In 2012 she takes on two major roles for Opera Australia: the title role in Richard Strauss's *Salome* and the dual role of Marie / Mariette in *Die tote Stadt*.

MORE: www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our_artists/principal_artists/cheryl_barker



Peter Coleman-Wright is widely considered one of the most versatile singers in the world today. His engagements include performances with the Metropolitan Opera New York, English National Opera, Opera Australia, the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. In 2012 he sings the role of Jokanaan (John the Baptist) in Richard Strauss's *Salome*, opposite wife Cheryl Barker. MORE: www.petercolemanwright.com/

In 2008 **Elizabeth Connell** made a triumphant debut in the role of *Turandot* at London's English National Opera. It is one of the many highlights of a career which has spanned five continents and many of the great soprano roles, including Elektra, Norma and Aida. In 2012 she returns to Melbourne to sing *Turandot*.

MORE: www.fischerartists.com/elizabeth-connell

Michael Lewis OAM is one of Australia's most respected artists. He is famous for his gripping interpretations of the great Verdi roles, including Rigoletto and Macbeth. He is also fearless in performing new repertoire, such as Cornelisz in *Batavia* and the Major in *Madeline Lee*. In 2012 he returns to the role of the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and also sings Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*.

MORE: www.patricktogher.com/artist/baritone-and-bass/Michael-Lewis

Emma Matthews is regarded as one of Australia's most outstanding sopranos. Winner of five Helpmann Awards and eight Green Room Awards, she is renowned for her versatility, ranging from baroque to twentieth-century and beyond. In 2012 she appears in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and as Violetta in the inaugural HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata*. MORE: www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our_artists/principal_artists/emma_matthews

Australian **John Pickering** won the Metropolitan Opera Award in 1971, (the year before Michael Lewis). He then left Australia and went on to have a successful career in Europe, singing the heldentenor repertoire. Now, forty years on, Opera Australia welcomes him back to Australia in the character role of Herod in *Salome*.

Introducing **Jessica Pratt**, an Australian soprano who makes her company debut this year in the role of Léïla in *The Pearlfishers*. Jessica has been with Rome Opera since 2005. From her base in Italy she has performed all over Europe, including the Vienna Staatsoper, La Scala, Milan and her debut, this year, at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*. MORE: www.jessicapratt.org

Jonathan Summers has achieved world acclaim for his interpretation of a wide variety of operatic roles in the great opera houses of the world, particularly the works of Mozart, Verdi and Puccini. In 2012 he sings the role of Alfredo's father, Giorgio Germont, in HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata*.

MORE: www.jonathansummers.co.uk

During a career spanning over 25 years, **John Wegner's** voice has thrilled audiences in opera houses across Europe with performances in major cities including Milan, London, Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, Berlin, Brussels, Prague, Oslo, Munich, Hamburg, Vienna and across the globe in Australia and Japan. Last seen in Sydney in the chilling role of Scarpia in *Tosca*, he returns in 2012 to play John the Baptist, Jokanaan, in Richard Strauss's *Salome*.

MORE: www.web.me.com/johnwegner/John_Wegner_Home_Page/Welcome.html

2012 GUEST ARTISTS: Directors

Julie Taymor is a designer, puppeteer, librettist, playwright and director working in theatre, opera and film, whose best known work is the Broadway production of *The Lion King*. Australian audiences will see her award-winning production of *The Magic Flute*, created for New York's Metropolitan Opera.

MORE: www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/tay0bio-1

Graeme Murphy has been at the forefront of Australian dance and theatre for four decades, as choreographer, director and designer. His two productions for Opera Australia, *Turandot* and *Aida*, have become classics in the repertoire. He is currently choreographer for the Melbourne premiere of *Love Never Dies*.

MORE: www.graememurphy.com

Benedict Andrews is one of the most sought after Australian theatre directors of his generation. He is known for startling adaptations of works from the classical repertoire. He directs his first opera, Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses*, for English National Opera in 2011, and *The Marriage of Figaro* for Opera Australia in 2012.

MORE: www.benedictandrews.com

James "Jim" Sharman is a director and writer for film and stage with over 70 productions to his credit. He is probably best known as the director of the 1973 theatrical hit *The Rocky Horror Show*. He first worked with Opera Australia at the age of 21, when he directed a radical *Don Giovanni*. His youthful and irreverent vision of *Così fan tutte* premiered in 2008.

MORE: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Sharmann

Francesca Zambello is the general and artistic director of Glimmerglass Opera. Recent work includes *The Ring Cycle* for San Francisco Opera and *West Side Story* on the floating stage in Bregenz. She takes a special interest in innovative productions, and in producing opera for wider audiences. For Opera Australia she directs the inaugural production of HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata*.

MORE: www.francescazambello.com

Bruce Beresford is one of Australia's best known film and opera directors. His films include *Breaker Morant* and *Driving Miss Daisy*. Following on from productions of *Streetcar Named Desire* and *Of Mice and Men*, Beresford now directs the Australian premiere production of *Die tote Stadt*.

MORE: www.bruceberesford.org

John Doyle is a Scottish stage director for musicals and plays. He won a Tony Award for his 2006 production of *Sweeney Todd*, which played in London's West End and on Broadway. He recently directed the movie *Main Street* starring Orlando Bloom and Colin Firth. *Lucia di Lammermoor* is his opera directing debut.

MORE: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Doyle

Gale Edwards's work ranges from large scale productions of musicals such as *The Boy from Oz* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* to Shakespeare, to opera with spectacular productions such as 2011's *La bohème*. In 2012 she turns her operatic instincts to a darker piece, Richard Strauss's *Salome*.

MORE: http://www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our_artists/creative_teams/gale_edwards

2012 GUEST ARTISTS: Conductors

Romanian conductor **Christian Badea** made his Opera Australia debut conducting *La bohème* in 2011. He returns in 2012 to conduct Korngold's masterpiece *Die tote Stadt* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

MORE: www.wolfartists.com/artists/conductors/christianbadea

Maurizio Barbacini has appeared with many of the world's great opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera New York, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin and the Komische Oper Berlin. He makes his Opera Australia debut in 2011 with Verdi's *Macbeth* and returns in 2012 to conduct *The Barber of Seville*.

MORE: www.imgartists.com

British conductor **Jonathan Darlington** is music director of the Duisburg Philharmonic Orchestra and Vancouver Opera. Most recently he conducted *Fidelio* with Opera Australia. He now returns to conduct *The Magic Flute*.

MORE: www.imgartists.com

Andrew Greene is director of the Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Program at Opera Australia. He has conducted over 50 productions of musicals, operas and stage shows and has appeared in concert with all the major Australian orchestras and in Beijing, Shanghai and Taiwan. In 2012 he conducts the 2011/12 New Year's Eve Gala, *The Merry Widow* and *The Magic Flute*. MORE: www.stopera.org.au/artists/AndrewGreene

Australian conductor **Simon Hewett** is establishing himself as one of the most versatile conductors of his generation. He divides his time between Europe and Australia and is principal conductor of Hamburg Ballet. In 2012 he conducts two new productions: *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Salome* as well as *Turandot*. MORE: www.simon-hewett.com

Anthony Legge is the Assistant Music Director of Opera Australia. Before moving to Australia he was Head of Music at the English National Opera for fourteen years, Director of Opera at the Royal Academy of Music, and Music Director of Clonter Opera. In 2012 he conducts *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Magic Flute* and *Aida*.

Benjamin Northey is one of Australia's new generation of young, dynamic conductors. He trained at the Sibelius Academy in Finland and with the London Philharmonic and made his professional debut with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 2003. He now makes his Opera Australia debut conducting *Così fan tutte*.

MORE: www.benjaminsnorthey.com

Ryusuke Numajiri trained under Seiji Osawa and was catapulted to the forefront of attention in the music world when he won the 40th Besançon International Conducting Competition in 1990. In 2012 he conducts *Madama Butterfly*.

After his triumphant debut performances of *Falstaff* in 2006, **Giovanni Reggioli** has become a firm favourite with Opera Australia audiences. The Italian born maestro is based in Washington and has appeared with Washington State Opera, the Met, Los Angeles Opera and many other companies across North America. In 2012 he conducts *Madama Butterfly*.

MORE: www.giovannireggioli.com

Guillaume Tourniaire was born in Provence, France, and studied in Geneva. He has been chorus master at Geneva Grand Theatre, and at La Fenice in Venice, and was music director for the State Opera of Prague from 2007 to 2009. He made his Opera Australia debut in 2011 and returns in 2012 to conduct *The Pearlfishers* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

MORE: www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our_artists/conductors/guillaume_tourniaire

Estonian conductor **Arvo Volmer** is Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and Artistic Director of the Estonian National Opera. He took *The Girl of the Golden West* around Australia in 2010 and now, in 2012, conducts *Aida* and *Turandot*. MORE: www.arvolmer.com

2012 BEYOND THE THEATRE

In 2012 Australia's Opera Australia continues to evolve and expand its activities to bring opera to an audience beyond the regular performance venues. These include cinema screenings, DVDs and CDs released on the Opera Australia label, the touring company Oz Opera, and the creative school program WotOpera.

If the public isn't connected to opera, then we have a real problem," says Opera Australia Artistic Director **Lyndon Terracini**. "Doing work which resonates with the widest possible audience is not just a duty for us. We do it because it matters, and because it is all part of creating an opera company for the twenty-first century."

Opera on the Big Screen

The first season of Opera Australia's cinema screenings rolled out in **29 cinemas** across the country. Due to popular demand, the initial season will now roll out again with the expanded cinema network – now between **60 and 70 cinemas across Australia and New Zealand**. International screenings will also begin in the USA, UK, Canada, Spain and Russia from July 2011 onwards.

Current titles include *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Rigoletto*. The latest productions to be filmed were *The Mikado* and *La bohème*. In 2012 this will continue. Each opera is shot in High Definition with 5.1 surround sound, using nine cameras.

Peter Cody, General Manager Film & Entertainment Content for Amalgamated Holdings Limited (which owns Greater Union, Event and Village Cinemas) adds, "we're very excited about this new partnership with Opera Australia and CinemaLive and the opportunity to offer these wonderful operas to our cinema-goers, whom otherwise may never get to see them."

Opera on the Small Screen

Operas which screen in cinemas are also released on CD, DVD and Blu-ray on Opera Australia's own independent recording label. Select Audio-Visual Distribution is working with Opera Australia to distribute the titles within Australia, and Naxos will work to distribute internationally to 60 countries worldwide including the US, Europe, Japan, South Africa, Argentina and Canada.

Opera on TV

Phase Three of Opera Australia's digital strategy is **TV broadcasts** in Australia and internationally. Each opera screens in **Australia** on ABC1, then ABC2, then is available online through iView for a two-week period.

International TV broadcasts will be handled through high definition TV broadcaster, **Brava**, which will take **17 titles** to TV screens throughout **Europe** (excluding Great Britain) and **North America**.



Lyndon Terracini says, “it’s one thing for us to say that opera is for everyone, but we have to find ways of making that a reality. We’re looking to shape new ways for people to experience opera. After all, it is basically just theatre, storytelling, spectacle and quite simply, the joy of singing. Our cinema broadcasts, and our new recording label, are part of delivering this.”

Opera on the Move

Opera Australia’s touring arm, Oz Opera will take a fully-staged new production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* to venues around NSW, Victoria and the ACT in 2012. The production will be directed by Australian playwright and director Michael Gow and stars Luke Gabbedy and Samuel Dundas as the womanising *Don*.

Opera in Schools

Oz Opera continues its annual program of primary school performances, taking live opera to primary schools across NSW and Victoria. Each year the hard-working Oz Opera schools company plays to up to 80,000 children. The Oz Opera truck arrives at the start of the school day, the school hall is transformed into a theatre space, the performance takes place then the performers answer questions about their performance before packing up and heading to the next school.

In 2012 NSW schools will see a 50-minute adaptation of Engelbert Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* and Victorian schools will see a 50-minute adaptation of Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*.



2012 MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

Opera Australia has an extensive collection of resources online including: photos, audio and video; backstage insights; repertoire background; production background (including e-guides); artist biographies; news; and our blog. Opera Australia also maintains a presence on social media networks including Twitter and Facebook.

The Opera Australia website is the place to start for information about any Opera Australia production. The site includes:

- Ticket bookings
- an [interactive calendar](#)
- information about each [production](#)
- [e-guides](#)
- [artist biographies](#)
- [trailers](#)
- [video and audio clips](#)
- [photos](#)
- [company information](#)
- links to other websites

The website also has a [Media Room](#) where all media releases are available for download.

HANDA Opera on the Sydney Harbour: www.operaonsydneyharbour.com.au

The dedicated website for HANDA Opera on Sydney Harbour: *La Traviata* 2012. Book tickets online and find out details of cast, creative teams, repertoire, sponsors, visitor information, news and packages. A Media Room houses press releases and images for download.

Blog: <http://blog.opera-australia.org.au>

The Opera Australia blog is a space for writing about opera in Australia. It's curated by the Digital Marketing Officer, with regular input from guest contributors. Examples of blog entries: a principal artist's [rehearsal diary](#); a report from [WotOpera participants](#); [Backstage with the Bohemians](#) feature; and [Opera Basics](#), an ongoing series of features about the nuts and bolts of opera.

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/operaaustralia

Trailers, video clips, and behind-the-scenes features at the Opera Australia YouTube Channel.

Twitter: www.twitter.com/OperaAust

News, photos and backstage reports, questions answered, special offers and updates plus daily conversations about opera and the performing arts, curated by the Digital Marketing Officer.



www.opera-australia.org.au