

O|PERA AUSTRALIA|A

Annual Report 2015



Vision

Enriching Australia's cultural life with exceptional opera.

Mission

To present opera that excites audiences and sustains and develops the art form.

Corporate Governance

Opera Australia is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Its governance is the responsibility of its Board of Directors, who are elected by its Members. The Board is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Company and its ongoing viability. The Company's direction and activities are underpinned by its agreed Values:

- Pursuit of excellence in everything we do
- Respect for knowledge, imagination and creative ambition
- Honesty and integrity in all our dealings
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Encouragement of professional development
- Respect and compassion for people
- Safe working environment

The Board of Directors of Opera Australia is also the Board of Directors of the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary company of Opera Australia. The Board of Directors delegates to the Chief Executive, and through him to the executive team, authority to manage, within the parameters set by the Board, the Company's activities.

The work of the Board is supported by:

Audit Committee - meets before each Board meeting and otherwise as required and is responsible for scrutinising the Company's management systems, financial processes and the financial prudence of its strategies. The Company's auditors meet with the Audit Committee on a regular basis and report on their processes and findings.

Development and Government Committee - meets as required and provides strategic advice on corporate partnerships, philanthropy and government engagement.

Property Advisory Committee - meets as required and makes recommendations to the Board regarding the Company's property portfolio.

Remuneration and Nominations Committee - meets as required and is responsible for overseeing the Company's remuneration policy, including remuneration of the senior management team.

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Giacomo Puccini

Photographs

Paul Burns, Jeff Busby, Albert Comper, Branco Gaica, Jon Green, Jim Lee, Hamilton Lund, Belinda Strodder, Ben Symons, Lisa Tomasetti, Prudence Upton

Cover: Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour - *Aida*

Inside front cover spread: *Mazda Opera in the Bowl*, Sidney Myer Music Bowl, Melbourne

Inside back cover spread: *Mazda Opera in the Domain*, Domain, Sydney



Jessica Hitchcock as Flinch, Lisa Maza as Roxie, Kate Miller-Heidke as Bird, Hollie Andrew as Coda, David Leha as 3 Stripe and Marcus Corowa as 2 Stripe
The Rabbits

Chairman's Report

David Mortimer AO



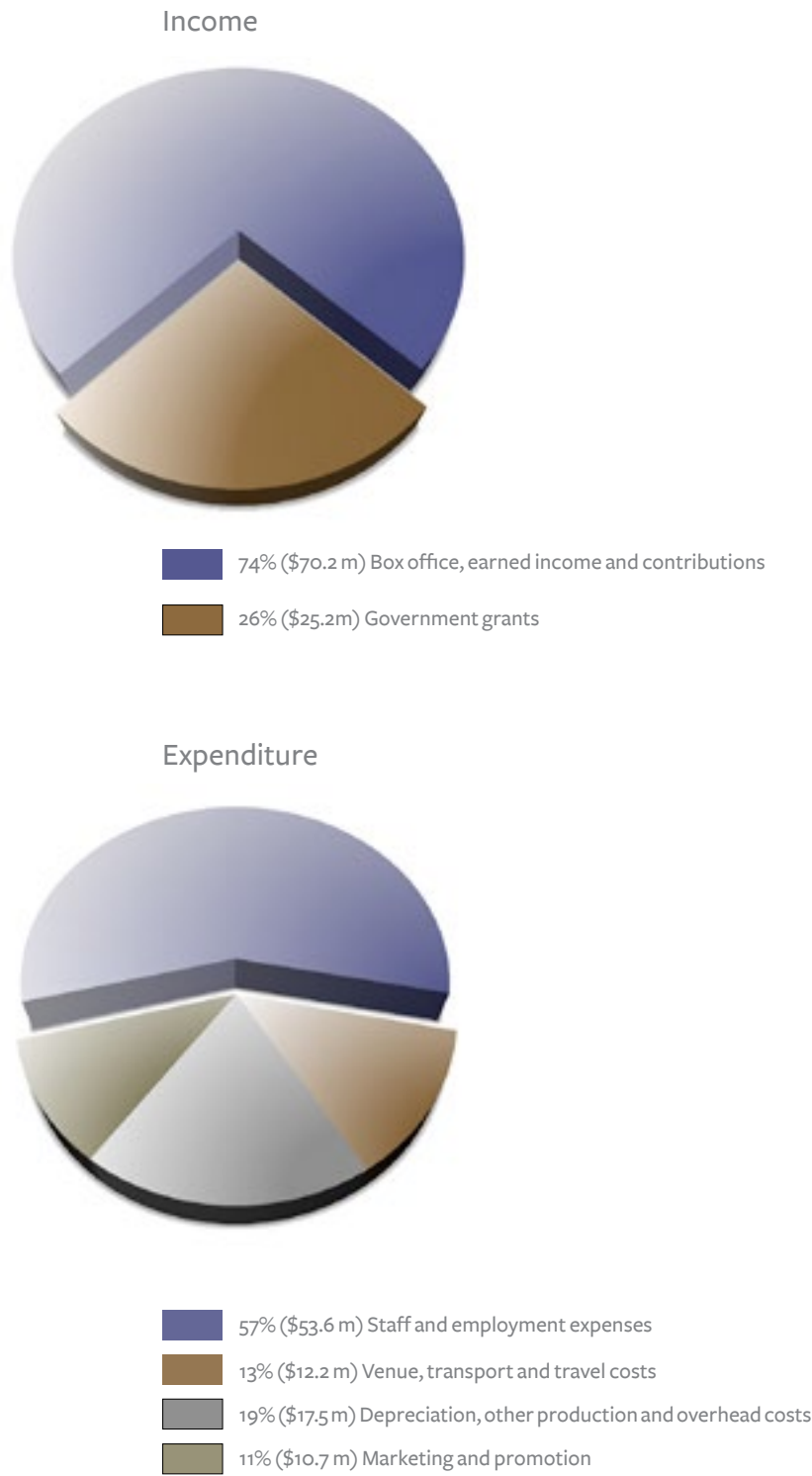
In 2014, Opera Australia's financial year ended with an operating deficit of \$2 million. At the time I wrote that this disappointing outcome could not be sustained over time and operating results must be improved significantly in 2015. With this in mind, I am delighted to report that we had an operating surplus of \$237,000 to 31 December 2015 and the Opera Australia Capital Fund returned \$316,000 resulting in a net consolidated comprehensive income of \$553,000. This is considerable turnaround for the Company and a tribute to Craig Hassall's leadership and Lyndon Terracini's programming, and the incredibly hard-working and productive workforce of Australia's largest performing arts company.

One of the major successes of 2015 was the Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour production of *Aida*. Presented on a vast stage over the harbour dominated by a towering bust of Nefertiti, singers, dancers, orchestra and live camels, over 57,000 people attended this spectacular event.

Our In-theatre seasons at the Sydney Opera House and Arts Centre Melbourne attracted the largest audiences in many years. Expenditure was well controlled throughout the Company, despite a very busy year of activity.

Lyndon Terracini has succeeded in his vision of Opera Australia as a 21st-century opera company, balancing the programming of opera classics while remaining fresh and contemporary. 2015 saw two newly commissioned productions in *The Rabbits* and *The Divorce*. The production of *The Rabbits* sold out in the Perth International Arts Festival in February and again sold out in October as part of the Melbourne Festival.

Income and Expenditure Components 2015



Opera Australia
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT CONTINUED

Along the way, *The Rabbits* won four Helpmann Awards and clearly demonstrated how a fresh, contemporary voice in opera can appeal to audiences of all ages. In contrast with opera companies around the world, Opera Australia has chosen to diversify its audience offering by using available distribution platforms. In a first for the Company, *The Divorce* was created for TV and film and was broadcast over four nights in December on ABC free-to-air television. An aggregated audience of more than a million viewers across Australia watched this innovative new work, delivering accessible opera directly into people's homes. *The Rabbits* and *The Divorce* are exciting additions to Opera Australia's repertoire.

In September 2014, Federal Attorney-General George Brandis announced a National Opera Review (NOR), chaired by Dr Helen Nugent. In September, the NOR panel released a discussion paper based on research, discussions and public hearings over the previous 12 months. This paper led to some debate about the role and place of opera companies in Australia. Opera Australia prepared a submission in response to the discussion paper with the aim of clarifying our position and presenting a picture of the place of Opera Australia in contemporary society. The final NOR recommendations were expected late in 2015 although various delays have meant the release will now occur later in 2016.

In 2014, we commenced a property review with the aim of finding ways to release value and to best balance use and maintenance of our properties throughout Australia. In August 2015 we reached an agreement with the owner of the property adjacent to our Melbourne Opera Centre to sell the two properties in one line in order to maximise value for Opera Australia. A condition of the sale was a lease back option so Opera Australia people and operations in Melbourne could continue *in situ* until alternative accommodation was sourced. The sale of the Melbourne Opera Centre reflects our confidence of our future in Melbourne and will give us an opportunity to purchase or lease new Melbourne premises. We anticipate obtaining better accommodation to cater for full orchestra rehearsals with chorus and soloists as well as providing better space and facilities for patron events. Melbourne will continue to be the home to Opera Australia's national regional touring and schools tours division and its commercial division.



Teddy Tahu Rhodes in
the title role of *Don Giovanni*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT CONTINUED

Much planning was undertaken in 2015 to manage the impact of the scheduled closure of our Sydney venue – the Joan Sutherland Theatre – for seven months in 2017. In effect, the closure means we cannot present our traditional Sydney Winter season in that year. Artistically, Lyndon has worked to build a viable alternative program for subscribers and other ticket buyers to mitigate any long-term impact on our relationship with our key audiences. The closure will reduce our performance weeks in Sydney by more than 50% and our earned revenue generated over those weeks is crucial in ensuring the viability of our company and complementing government, philanthropic and corporate support. The Sydney Opera House venue and location also provides a high prestige advantage for corporate entertainment. The disruption whilst necessary will have significant financial impacts on the Company and we are attempting to alleviate the costs of disruption where possible.

On a more personal note I would like to pay tribute to our Board Member Robert Leece AO RFD who passed away suddenly in December. The loss of Robert was felt even more keenly as he was only appointed to the Board in July. 2015 was also a year in which I suffered a lengthy illness which took me offline for a considerable period of time. I would like to thank Tim McFarlane who stepped in as Acting Chairman and helped steer the Company through difficult times.

I must acknowledge the importance of the financial support we receive from our major stakeholders including patrons, subscribers and corporate sponsors. The work of the Opera Australia Capital Fund is also vital to the future of our company and I would like to thank its Board and patrons. Our work across the country is supported by our government partners, the Federal Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, and the governments of New South Wales and Victoria.

Finally, as always, on behalf of the Board I would like to thank the Opera Australia team for the outstanding 2015 productions in theatres, regional venues, schools and outdoors. Over the year, around 1,500 artists, technicians, wardrobe and props makers, designers, directors, musicians along with our hard-working support teams across many disciplines, drove Opera Australia's core business to deliver exceptional opera to audiences across the country.



Lise Lindstrom in the title role of *Turandot*

Chief Executive's Report

Craig Hassall AM



Over 2015, Opera Australia continued to position itself as a truly 21st-century opera company by harnessing new technology, new platforms and new collaborations to broaden the parameters of opera and attract new and more diverse audiences. 2015 was the year we introduced the magical world of *The Rabbits* to sell-out audiences across the country and presented our first opera, *The Divorce*, created specifically for TV and film. Along with critical and audience acclaim for our annual in-theatre seasons in Sydney and Melbourne, we travelled the country with our touring production of *The Magic Flute*, visited hundreds of schools with a specially produced classroom-sized *Hansel and Gretel*, and reached out via community choirs in Parramatta.

It was also a year of intense scrutiny with the release of a discussion paper arising from the National Opera Review, and a year of significant planning to manage the 2017 temporary closure of our Sydney venue, the Joan Sutherland Theatre. On the flipside, 2015 was also the year in which our Young Artist Program graduate, Nicole Car, made her resoundingly successful debut at the Royal Opera Covent Garden, launching her career on the international stage.

Of course, no Opera Australia year would be complete without major events such as the perennially successful Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour – for 2015, a sumptuous production of *Aida* complete with camels; a dazzling musical – a tap dancing extravaganza with wonderful Cole Porter songs, *Anything Goes*; and, of course, a clutch of Helpmann Awards and Green Room Awards.

In-theatre Productions

Our in-theatre attendances were the highest in many years in both Sydney and Melbourne. The Sydney New Year's Eve Gala and Opera were once again sold out and the subsequent season of *La Bohème* was a huge success and featured the Australian debut of Maija Kovalevska in the role of Mimì.

Julie Taymor's delightfully playful production of *The Magic Flute* returned to the Sydney Opera House with this version specially designed to appeal to families and children. The season included a 'relaxed' performance in which children with learning difficulties could talk and walk around. John Bell's revival of his acclaimed production of *Tosca* set in 1943 when Mussolini's successors abandoned Rome to the invading German armies featured Amanda Echalaz in her Australian debut in the title role.

Our Sydney Summer audiences would riot if we did not include one of the world's most loved operas, *Madama Butterfly*. In this Moffatt Oxenbould production Sydney audiences were treated to a remarkable performance of Cio-Cio-San by Alexia Voulgaridou who last wowed local audiences with her *Tosca* in 2014. The

next and very different production in Sydney was a startling and powerful new production of Gounod's *Faust*. Featuring a roll call of fabulous artists such as Michael Fabiano, Nicole Car, Teddy Tahu Rhodes and director Sir David McVicar, this dark and sinister co-production with the the Royal Opera House Covent Garden attracted brilliant reviews and a Helpmann Award for Best Male Performer in an Opera for Michael Fabiano.

The Melbourne Autumn season opened with *Madama Butterfly*. For this production, one of Opera Australia's favourite sopranos, Hyeseoung Kwon sang the role of Cio-Cio-San. Her interpretation of the abandoned lover won her many critical plaudits and, as word spread, tickets proved hard to obtain. We enjoyed our highest attendance levels for some years thanks to the power of Puccini and wonderful casting. Sir David McVicar's dark and provocative production of *Don Giovanni* featured an all-Australian cast led by Teddy Tahu Rhodes in the title role. First seen in Sydney in 2014, Mozart's dramatic opera was the first of three specially commissioned new productions of the Da Ponte trilogy directed by McVicar. Elijah Moshinsky's production of *Don Carlos* returned after decades and was a *tour de force*. This

fiendishly difficult and lavish opera turned into the hit of the Melbourne autumn and Sydney winter seasons. Milijana Nikolic, Ferruccio Furlanetto, Giacomo Prestia and José Carbó provided spectacular singing alongside almost 200 performers in the grandest of Verdi operas.

The Sydney Winter season opened with a revival of Graeme Murphy's lavish and fluid production of *Turandot*. And what a start it was to the winter season. Two of the most powerful international singers working today filled the principal roles of Turandot and Calaf. Together, Lise Lindstrom and Yonghoon Lee captivated audiences with their magnificent voices and stage presence. Opera Australia artist Lorina Gore made her debut in the role of Violetta Valéry in *La Traviata*. Elijah Moshinsky's sumptuous production conducted by Verdi specialist Renato Palumbo provided a perfect backdrop to this much-loved opera. Moshinsky's production of *Don Carlos*, presented as part of the Melbourne Autumn season, opened in Sydney with Latonia Moore in the role of Elisabeth de Valois along with José Carbó, Ferruccio Furlanetto and Milijana Nikolic. To conclude the Sydney Winter season, Sir David McVicar directed a new production

of *The Marriage of Figaro*, the second of the Da Ponte trilogy. This production was much lauded for Jenny Tiramani's meticulous designs which included materials, decorations and dyes of the time, with the vocal brilliance of Nicole Car as the Countess and Paolo Bordogna as Figaro.

McVicar's production of *The Marriage of Figaro* opened the Melbourne Spring season with Jane Ede making her debut in the role of the Countess. This was followed by a revival of Simon Phillips' cheeky and very Australian adaptation of *The Elixir of Love*.

Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour

One of Sydney's most anticipated outdoor events, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, was the setting for a magnificent new production of *Aida*. Once again, this fourth year of our annual outdoor spectacle gained national and international recognition and showed off Sydney as one of the world's great tourism destinations. With Latonia Moore in the title role, the

Opera Australia Annual Report 2015



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT CONTINUED

production, directed by Gale Edwards and designed by Mark Thompson, was dominated by a huge bust of Nefertiti, glittering costumes, exotic dancers and live camels. The film of the production was distributed across Australia and attracted thousands of viewers internationally.

The success of Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour is due to the ongoing investment of the NSW Government through Destination NSW and the vision and generosity of Dr Haruhisa Handa.

Annual Musical

Our annual musical proved to be a critical success. Described by the *New York Times* as 'a deluxe candy box of Cole Porter's best songs', *Anything Goes* delighted audiences in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Starring the indefatigable Caroline O'Connor, audiences clapped and stomped along to some of the most strenuous and challenging dance and tap routines imaginable. *Anything Goes* claimed three Helpmann Awards: Best Choreography in a Musical for Andrew Hallsworth, Best Female Actor in a Musical for Caroline O'Connor and Best Male Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical for Alex Rathgeber.

I must acknowledge our brilliant production partner, John Frost, for his exceptional contribution to the musical art form and enthusiastic contribution to our annual musical extravaganza.

National Engagement

Since 1996 Opera Australia has toured to 110 different venues, presenting 549 performances of high quality opera to a regional audience of more than 245,000. Along the way we have built the regional relationships that enable us to be nimble enough to present opera in regional towns and communities in vastly differing venues. Our 2015 regional tour of *The Magic Flute* was designed to entertain people of all ages and toured 17 regional centres in Victoria, Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. We also undertook an extensive Primary Schools Tour through Victoria and NSW with a touring party of professional performers. These tours reached over 70,000 students across urban, outer-metropolitan and regional areas.

However, the depth of our regional engagement runs deeper than 'in and out' regional performances. Our Regional Children's Chorus and Regional Student Scholarship programs engage children and young people in each town we visit. These provide training and development opportunities for children

Top Left: Hiromi Omura as Madame Butterfly
Madama Butterfly
 Left: Durkin as Adina and
 members of the Opera Australia Chorus
The Elixir of Love

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT CONTINUED

to perform onstage alongside professional singers, orchestra and crew. This is not just a participatory exercise, but also an exercise in artistic excellence as we develop regional artists over time. Over the two-year (2014/15) national Regional Tour of *The Magic Flute*, the inaugural Regional Children's Chorus program featured 757 children across the country performing alongside our professional singers, in their own towns, seen by their family, friends and communities. A local choir leader was selected in each participating town, who then either created a new choir, or worked with an existing one. Since the 2014 tour of *The Magic Flute*, two members of our Children's Chorus, one from Bendigo and one from Armidale, have successfully auditioned for Opera Australia's mainstage seasons. Proof that the Regional Children's Chorus is a wonderful opportunity and training ground for the next generation of artists and arts lovers.

Opera Australia also developed regional talent through our Regional Student Scholarships. This scholarship is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for emerging regional performers. Over 130 students auditioned during our last Regional Tour, receiving invaluable audition experience and feedback on their performance, equivalent to a masterclass. Ultimately four senior secondary students were selected and invited to come and spend a week at our national headquarters in Sydney.

By bridging the opera education gap for children in regional Australia, we foster a lifelong love of the arts and create opportunities for learning that may not be otherwise possible outside the capital cities.

A 21st-Century Opera Company

Like major opera companies around the world, Opera Australia must confront changing demographics, distribution platforms, people's taste and how they access entertainment and cultural needs. We are confronting this issue head on. This year, in association with ABC TV, Princess Pictures and The Opera Conference, we presented our first opera created specifically for viewing outside of traditional venues – *The Divorce*. The result was a unique multi-platform project that re-invented opera for television,

film and online audiences across the country. Composed by Elena Kats-Chernin with libretto by Joanna Murray-Smith, this new Australian work was initially broadcast over four nights on ABC TV in December last year. *The Divorce* had a cumulative reach of 1.1 million viewers including a regional (non-city) reach of 311,000 viewers or 4% of Australia's regional population. In regional NSW, 49,000 people watched at least one episode with many more watching on iView. Although we have a long history of presenting and commissioning new operatic work, the audience numbers for *The Divorce* were far greater than other contemporary productions presented in traditional venues. This is a remarkable feat for a new operatic work.

In February we presented a newly commissioned opera, *The Rabbits*, as part of the Perth International Arts Festival. This co-production with Barking Gecko Theatre Company in association with West Australian Opera was co-commissioned by the Perth International Arts Festival and the Melbourne Festival. It is based on the much-loved book of the same name by John Marsden with illustrations by Oscar award-winning Shaun Tan. The production was brought to life with original composition by Kate Miller-Heidke and Iain Grandage, libretto by Lally Katz and directed by John Sheedy. The production sold out in Perth and again sold out in October

as part of the Melbourne International Arts Festival. *The Rabbits* won four Helpmann Awards including Best Presentation for Children, Best Costume Design, Best New Australian Work and Best Original Score. This successful venture shows very clearly that if the product is right then people will come.

Our Stakeholders

Our continued expansion and evolution is only possible due to the support of many key stakeholders. The Federal Government, through the Australia Council for the Arts, is our primary government supporter. The New South Wales and Victorian Governments' ongoing support is vital and I must acknowledge the investment of Destination NSW and the generosity of Dr Haruhisa Handa for our annual presentation of Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour. The Federal Government is also a key partner of our national touring program through Playing Australia.



Hugh Sheridan and
Lisa McCune in *The Divorce*

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT CONTINUED

Our Principal Partner Mazda Australia once again generously contributed to our level of public engagement through two major free outdoor events, *Mazda Opera in the Domain* (Sydney) and *Mazda Opera in the Bowl* (Melbourne). These annual, free outdoor events allow thousands of people to experience the brilliant sounds of Opera Australia soloists and orchestra in a casual, family-friendly setting. Alongside Mazda sits a long list of ongoing partnerships with Australian companies that allow us to present work in our major cities and regional centres.

The level of private support continues to grow. We have an incredibly committed and loyal group of philanthropists who assist us in providing some of our most valuable programs such as supporting emerging artists and the development of educational and outreach programs. To all of you, thank you.

The Team

Opera needs more people than any other live art form to succeed. More than 1,500 people were employed over 2015 in creating opera, presenting opera, building opera, touring opera, marketing opera, broadcasting opera and engaging people young and old across Australia with opera. The Australian Opera and Ballet

Orchestra (AOBO) maintains its position as the busiest orchestra in the country and it provides the backbone to all that we do. In a typical year, the Sydney-based AOBO will give some 175 performances of more than a dozen operas, and more than 80 performances for The Australian Ballet while Orchestra Victoria supports our Melbourne seasons. In June, Jun Yi Ma was appointed Concertmaster and Artistic Adviser of the AOBO. Our permanent chorus and ensemble deliver their vocal magic night after night, day after day, to hundreds of thousands of people around the country. Our Artistic director Lyndon Terracini continues to drive the Company's artistic ambition and must be congratulated on expanding Opera Australia's reach and accessibility and delivering a 21st-century vision for opera. Our Board of Directors - chaired by David Mortimer and Tim McFarlane as Acting Chair - is essential to our longer term planning and helping us to navigate a difficult financial environment. Our teams and crews in Sydney and Melbourne keep everything ticking over, working assiduously and creatively to keep our organisation lean and nimble.

We have to be agile, both creatively and financially, to ensure a strong and bold future for Opera Australia. We are uniquely Australian and unique in the world. It is by presenting exceptional and accessible opera experiences and exciting audiences around the nation that Opera Australia will ensure its future.



Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour - Aida

Our People

Opera Australia is one of the largest employers in the Live Performance industry in Australia. We have about 230 core permanent staff. In addition, we employ about 1000 seasonal and casual employees throughout the year on different productions. Our staff include singers, orchestra instrumentalists, repetiteurs, language coaches, directors, conductors, designers, electricians, mechanists, props technicians, dressers, make-up technicians and other production staff, stage managers, stores persons, carpenters,

welders, tailors, sewers, wig-makers, painters, writers, ticket-sellers, front-of-house staff and administrators. Opera Australia partners with venue providers, such as the Sydney Opera House, the Melbourne Arts Centre and various schools and regional art centres to work collaboratively with their back stage and front-of-house staff. Our volunteers also make significant contributions to our activities. All our people bear the hall marks of superior skills in their respective crafts and passion for the Opera.

Full Time Equivalents				
	Ongoing	Seasonal	Casual	Total
ARTISTIC				
Principal singers	1	25	20	46
Chorus	34	2	15	51
Orchestral players	57	1	24	82
Dancers	0	0	7	7
Extras	0	0	7	7
Music and language staff	7	2	2	11
Other artist support	4	3	7	14
Artistic administration	13	0	1	14
TOTAL ARTISTIC	116	33	83	232
TECHNICAL				
Stage management	6	4	2	12
Stage staff	15	13	14	42
Workshop staff	16	1	10	27
Wardrobe and Wigs Staff	14	15	7	36
Stores Staff	4	2	9	15
Facilities	2	2	4	8
Technical Administration	9	1	0	10
TOTAL TECHNICAL	66	38	46	150
OTHER				
Marketing Development and Sales Staff	22	10	4	36
Management and Admin	26	9	1	36
TOTAL OTHER	48	19	5	72
TOTAL	230	90	134	454

Artists 2015

Principals

Stacey Alleaume Hollie Andrew Natalie Aroyan Zara Barrett Emily Barber Kirillie Blythman Nicole Car Olivia Cranwell Hannah Dahlenburg Regina Daniel Jacqueline Dark Jessica Dean Anna Dowsley* Carmen Duncan Rachelle Durkin Amanda Echaz Jane Ede Taryn Fiebig Julie Lea Goodwin* Lorina Gore Antoinette Halloran Roxane Hislop Jessica Hitchcock	Angela Hogan Anke Höppner Majja Kovalevska Debora Krizak Hyeseoung Kwon Celeste Lazarenko Lise Lindstrom Claire Lyon Anna McDougall Jacqueline Mabardi Daria Masiero Dominica Matthews Emma Matthews Lisa Maza Kate Miller-Heidke Latonia Moore Milijana Nikolic Caroline O'Connor Hiromi Omura Sian Pendry Kathryn Radcliffe Rebecca Rashleigh Agnes Sarkis	Clarissa Spata Alexia Voulgaridou Jessica Westcott Amanda Windred Victoria Yastrebova Nicole Youl Anna Yun Jonathan Abernethy* Richard Anderson Pelham Andrews Damian Arnold Jud Arthur Jonathan Biggins Andrei Bondarenko Paolo Bordogna Kanen Breen Martin Buckingham Giorgio Caoduro José Carbó Conal Coad Gerry Connolley Marcus Corowa Aldo Di Toro	Gennadi Dubinsky Samuel Dundas James Egglestone Michael Fabiano Warren Fisher Walter Fraccaro Ferruccio Furlanetto Warwick Fyfe Luke Gabbedy Steven Gallop Ashley Giles Alexander Hargreaves Geoffrey Harris Michael Hart Christopher Hillier Michael Honeyman Andrew Jones Nicholas Jones Wayne Scott Kermond Simon Kim Rame Lahaj Rosario La Spina Yonghoon Lee	David Leha John Longmuir Shane Lowrencev Graeme Macfarlane Todd McKenney Oliver Mann Riccardo Massi Simon Meadows Robert Mitchell Andrew Moran David Parkin Giacomo Prestia Alex Rathgeber Arnold Rawls Eugene Raggio Teddy Tahu Rhodes Claudio Sgura Daniel Sumegi Paulo Sztot Daniel Tambasco Adrian Tamburini Gianluca Terranova Diego Torre
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Chorus

Chloris Bath Emma Castelli Annabelle Chaffey Anna-Louise Cole Rebecca Currier Mary-Ann Fraser Eleanor Greenwood Eva Kong	Vanessa Lewis Yolanda Lorenzato Jodie McGuren Marjory McKay Ke-Lu Ma Lynette Murray Sandra Oldis Sharon Olde	Leah Thomas Margaret Trubiano Katherine Wiles Anna Yun Dean Bassett Christopher Bath Gregory Brown Brad Cooper	Malcolm Ede Thomas Hamilton Scott Hannigan Stuart Haycock Jin Tea Kim Nara Lee David Lewis	Jeffrey Lock Jonathan McCauley Kent McIntosh Clifford Plumpton Benjamin Rasheed Ryan Sharp Sitiveni Talei
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Conductors

Christian Badea Andrea Battistoni Peter Casey Brian Castles-Onion	Michael Curtain Paul Fitzsimon Ian Grandage	Simon Kenway Anthony Legge Andrea Licata	Gianluca Martinenghi Nicholas Milton Andrea Molino	Benjamin Northey Renato Palumbo Guillaume Tourniaire
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Music Staff

Chorus Master Assistant Chorus Master	Anthony Hunt Thomas Johnson			
Repetiteurs Siro Battaglin Brian Castles-Onion Pamela Christie Michael Curtain	Paul Fitzsimon Brad Gilchrist Sue Goessling John Haddock	Raymond Lawrence Tahu Matheson Stephen Walter	Language Coaches Tanja Binggeli Nicole Dorigo Adriana Hanic	

Directors

Matthew Barclay John Bell AO OBE Dean Bryant Gale Edwards Naomi Edwards	Heather Fairbairn Andrew Frith Kate Gaul Michael Gow Hugh Halliday	David McVicar Andy Morton Elijah Moshinsky Graeme Murphy AO	Moffatt Oxenbould AM Simon Phillips Shane Placentino Roger Press	Johanna Puglisi John Sheedy Julie Taymor Kim Walker Francesca Zambello
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Designers

Paul Brown Russell Cohen Tony David Cray Michael Curry Charles Edwards	Peter England Dale Ferguson Kristian Fredrikson Peter Hall Robert Jones	Robert Kemp Julie Lynch Teresa Negroponte Brigitte Reiffenstuel Michael Scott-Mitchell	Julie Taymor Mark Thompson Brian Thomson Jenny Tiramani George Tsy-pin	Gabriela Tylesova Michael Waters Anna Watkins Michael Yeargan
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Lighting Designers

Robert Bryan Paule Constable Gary Dooley David Finn Donald Holder	Gary Marder Nigel Levings John Drummond Montgomery Jonathan Perry	John Rayment Nick Schlieper Matt Scott Trent Suidgeest Gavan Swift		
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Choreographers

Mark Dendy Andrew George Andrew Hallsworth Lucas Jervies	Michael Keegan-Dolan Graeme Murphy AO Daphne Strothmann			
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* Members of the Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Program
Program Coordinator: Andrew Greene

Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra Report



Nicole Car and Andrea Molino
with members of the
Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

The Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra (AOBO) is the busiest of all Australian orchestras, giving around 290 performances each year. A wholly owned subsidiary of Opera Australia, the AOBO performs for Opera Australia and The Australian Ballet during their respective Sydney seasons, as well as Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour.

Formerly the Sydney Elizabethan Orchestra, the AOBO has earned a reputation for warmth of sound and impressive flexibility in the most challenging of environments. The repertoire performance schedule of Opera Australia means that up to five different productions are being performed and prepared at any one time, resulting in up to eight performances per week. Excellent seasonal and casual musicians provide respite for the permanent musicians of the Orchestra.

Notable recent productions for Opera Australia in the last year have included: Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour - *Aida*, which saw the orchestra playing once again on the harbour stage in the acclaimed fourth season of this landmark Sydney event; Gounod's *Faust* and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in sumptuous productions directed by David McVicar and each conducted by Guillaume Tourniaire and Anthony Legge; a return of John Bell's superb production of Puccini's *Tosca* conducted by Andrea Battistoni; Elijah Moshinsky's lavish interpretation of

Verdi's massive *Don Carlos* conducted by Andrea Licata; and The Australian Ballet's much-loved production of *Sleeping Beauty* conducted by Nicolette Fraillon.

In 2015 the AOBO was involved in numerous interesting projects outside the orchestra pit. In addition to the customary NYE Gala Concert and Australian Singing Competition Finals Concert, the AOBO was able to venture into new projects, partly due to Opera Australia's Musical Theatre production of *Anything Goes* requirement for a swing band. The AOBO was therefore available for: an ABC Classics recording project with rising star soprano Nicole Car and conductor Andrea Molino that was released as the CD called *The Kiss*, rising to the top of the ARIA classical list; Andrew McKinnon's production of *From La Scala to Broadway* in the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall; Gala Concerts with famous soprano Angela Gheorghiu performed in Sydney and Melbourne; and ABC's made-for-TV opera *The Divorce*. The AOBO also performed with YouTube's number 1 classical artist, Ludovico Einaudi, in sold out performances.

The Orchestra also features on recent live recordings in the Sydney Opera House of *Don Giovanni*, *Rigoletto*, *La Boheme* and *Madama Butterfly* and all the HOSH productions (*La Traviata*, *Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Aida* and, in 2016, *Turandot*) in cinema and DVD release.



Tom Hamilton as Papageno
Opera Australia's National Tour of
The Magic Flute

Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra



Concertmaster and Artistic Adviser Jun Yi Ma†
Associate Concertmaster Huy-Nguyen Bui
Deputy Concertmaster Catalin Ungureanu (*Acting*)

Violin

Adrian Keating*
Tony Gault†
Airena Nakamura (2nd Violins)
Mark Fitzpatrick* (2nd Violins)
Virginia Blunt
Thomas Dundas
Rachel Easton
Yu-Qing Rebecca Irwin
Marek Kruszynski
Samuel Podjarski
Daniel Rosenbaum
Robert Sek
Jaroslaw Talar
Rachel Westwood

Viola

Virginia Comerford
Angela Lindsay^
Amanda Murphy
Magda Kruszynska

Cello

Teije Hylkema
Eszter Mikes-Liu*
Andrew Hines**
Pierre Emery
Margaret Iddison
Henry Urbanavicius

Double Bass

Brett Berthold
Andrew Meisel*
Max McBride^
Edmund Bastian

Flute

Elizabeth Pring
Amanda Hollins*

Piccolo

Diane Berger

Oboe

Conall McClure
Matthew Tighe*
Mark Bruwel

Cor Anglais

Andrew Malec

Clarinet

Peter Jenkin
Phillip Green*
Richard Rourke

Bassoon

Douglas Eyre
Matthew Ockenden*
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Caroline O'Connor as Reno Sweeney
Anything Goes

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Opera Australia salutes those Patrons who have joined Syndicate 30: Mozart for 2016. Members of each year's Syndicate support a new production and participate directly in the work of Opera Australia. We sincerely thank our Syndicate 30 Patrons for their generosity.

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Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Program

The Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Program is a two-year training program for selected young Australian opera singers. Designed to strengthen and supplement their already evident talent and performance skills, the program involves them closely with the rehearsal and performance activity of the Company. Opera Australia is most grateful for the support provided to enable the participation of singers in the Young Artist Program. Members of the program in 2016 are:

Stacey Alleaume (supported by The Robert Lomax Young Artists Scholarship)
Julie Lea Goodwin (supported by an anonymous donor)
Eva Kong (supported by Roy and Gay Woodward)
Robert Greene - Program Coordinator

The Susan and Isaac Wakil Foundation Access Program

Many people will experience opera for the first time this year thanks to the generous support of the Susan and Isaac Wakil Foundation. The Susan and Isaac Wakil Foundation Access Program was established to give people who would not otherwise have access to opera the opportunity to attend Opera Australia performances at the Sydney Opera House and Arts Centre Melbourne for just \$20. We are indebted to the Susan and Isaac Wakil Foundation for their inspired philanthropy.



Opera Society Inc.

Opera Society Inc. is a Melbourne-based organisation which supports Opera Australia through its fund-raising activities and provides its members with informative and entertaining events throughout the year. The Society offers access to dress rehearsals, insights, film nights, lunches, brunches, concerts and recitals. Information about the Society is available from the office on (03) 9685 3757 or at www.operasociety.org.au



Andrei Bondarenko as Count Almaviva, Annabelle Chaffey and Anna Yun as the Bridesmaids, Taryn Fiebig as Susanna, Paolo Bordogna as Figaro, Graeme Macfarlane as Don Curzio, Richard Anderson as Dr Bartolo, Jacqueline Dark as Marcellina and Nicole Car as Countess Almaviva
The Marriage of Figaro

Opera Australia Capital Fund

Michael Traill AM
Chairman



The Opera Australia Capital Fund's reserves continued to grow in 2015, with total equity reaching \$14.8 million at year end. In keeping with the Fund's aim to help ensure the ongoing financial viability of Opera Australia, another distribution of \$500,000 was made to the Company. The annual grants to Opera Australia now total almost \$4 million.

In less than three years the Capital Fund's activities in London, including at The Dorchester and Rio Tinto headquarters, have attracted a growing number of supporters, largely Australian expats, with an interest in opera, its future in Australia and the development of young Australian singers. We look forward to the growth of this association.

We extend sincere thanks to Ken Reed for hosting a Capital Fund reception at his Sydney apartment in August and to David Newby and Jane Clarke for welcoming

Capital Fund supporters to their home in the Southern Highlands in the Spring. The house and garden of Oldbury Farm, together with the voice of Julie Lea Goodwin, were the stars at this successful fundraising event.

2015 ended on a memorable note with the 11th annual Council of Governors' dinner held at the Old Supreme Court of NSW, in the room named after its architect, Alexander Dawson. This gathering brought together members of the Council of Governors who have generously made leadership contributions or pledged significant bequests. During the year we welcomed new members, Michael and Mim Bartlett.



I am fortunate to have had the support of my fellow Directors, David Armstrong, Philip Bacon, Ashley Dawson-Damer, Craig Hassall, François Kunc, David Mortimer, Roslyn Packer and Carena Shankar and thank them for their dedication and the active part they play in the activities of the Capital Fund.

Most importantly, and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend sincere thanks to those opera lovers who, as benefactors to the Capital Fund, have chosen to make a significant difference to the future financial security of the national opera company, directly benefiting the audiences and artists of today and tomorrow.

Concert at Buckingham Palace

A number of our supporters and guests were also invited to a special concert and reception at Buckingham Palace this year, celebrating the wealth of young Australian singers. The joint performance by Opera Australia and The Royal College of Music was attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, who has a longstanding commitment to the importance of nurturing young musical talent in Australia, having previously attended Opera Australia's 50th Anniversary Gala concert in 2006 and visited the Sydney Opera House during The Prince and The Duchess's tour of Australia in 2012.

Those Australians who had travelled from home and the expats who were present in the Ballroom were all equally proud of the stellar performances of Kiandra Howarth and Samuel Sakker, members of the prestigious Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House, and Opera Australia principal, Taryn Fiebig.



Above: HRH The Prince of Wales with Conductor, Michael Rosewell, and Artists, Taryn Fiebig, Kiandra Howarth and Samuel Sakker
Below: HRH The Prince of Wales with Kenneth Reed, Lady Potter, Leonard Groat and Craig Hassall



Latonia Moore as
Elisabeth de Valois
Don Carlos

OPERA AUSTRALIA

CAPITAL FUND

The Opera Australia Capital Fund was established to build capital reserves to help ensure the ongoing financial viability of Opera Australia.

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The Council of Governors comprises Directors of the Trustee Company; Donor Members who have either contributed a significant donation or pledged a specific bequest; and Special Members who actively participate in the Capital Fund’s fundraising efforts.

The Capital Fund continues to grow and makes an annual distribution to Opera Australia. This significant achievement has been made possible through the generosity of the following donors as well as the Australian Government and the State Governments of New South Wales and Victoria through the Reserves Incentive Funding Scheme.

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Ray Wilson OAM and the
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Bequests

You can make a lasting contribution to the future of opera in Australia by making a bequest to the Opera Australia Capital Fund. Your bequest will provide financial security to enhance Opera Australia’s artistic achievements and outreach programs. The Company is enormously grateful for the support it has received through bequests from the estates of:-

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If you wish to discuss either a donation to the Capital Fund or your bequest hopes, please contact Neroli Hobbins in Sydney on 02 9318 8386 or Sally Percival in Melbourne on 03 9685 3761.

Opera Australia Activities

Attendances and Box Office 2015

Season	Opera	Composer	Performances	Venues	Admissions		Box office (\$)	
					2015	2014	2015	2014
In-theatre								
Sydney Summer								
Sydney Opera House	La Bohème	Puccini	7					
	The Magic Flute	Mozart	11					
	Tosca	Puccini	19					
	Madama Butterfly	Puccini	23					
	Faust (NP, Op Conf)	Gounod	9					
			69		77,818	78,030	10,231,606	10,363,333
Melbourne Autumn								
Arts Centre Melbourne	Madama Butterfly	Puccini	8					
	Don Giovanni	Mozart	8					
	Don Carlos	Verdi	5					
			21		30,345	36,731	3,812,912	4,239,924
Sydney Winter								
Sydney Opera House	Turandot	Puccini	18					
	La Traviata	Verdi	9					
	Don Carlos	Verdi	9					
	The Marriage of Figaro (NP)	Mozart	15					
			51		61,763	50,419	9,127,062	7,065,513
Melbourne Spring								
Arts Centre Melbourne	The Marriage of Figaro	Mozart	8					
	The Elixir of Love	Donizetti	4					
			12		17,313	23,934	2,079,110	2,764,519
2016 Sydney Summer *								
Sydney Opera House	The Magic Flute	Mozart	1					
			1		1,421		152,340	
Sydney New Years Eve								
Sydney Opera House	La Bohème	Puccini	1					
			1		1,442	1,422	487,223	477,198
In-theatre Subtotal			155	2	190,102	190,536	25,890,255	24,910,487
Musical Theatre								
Princess Theatre, Melbourne	Anything Goes	Cole Porter	63					
Brisbane Lyric Theatre	Anything Goes	Cole Porter	27					
Sydney Opera House	Anything Goes	Cole Porter	67					
Musical Theatre subtotal			157	3	136,641	281,088	14,486,228	31,982,048
Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour								
Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Sydney	Aida (NP)	Verdi	25					
Opera on Sydney Harbour subtotal			25	1	55,011	39,208	8,643,205	5,959,978
Concerts								
Sydney Opera House	Great Opera Hits	Various	12					
Sydney Opera House	New Year's Eve Gala	Various	1					
Concerts Subtotal			13	1	13,705	21,239	1,578,505	2,919,284
Total In-theatre/Music Theatre/ Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour/Concerts			350	6	395,459	532,071	50,598,193	65,771,797

<i>Free Events</i>								
Mazda Opera in the Domain	<i>Opera Highlights Concert</i>	Various	1					
Mazda Opera in the Bowl (Ft. Opera Australia Community Choirs)	<i>Opera Highlights Concert</i>	Various	1					
Western Sydney Community Choirs Concert	<i>Opera Highlights Concert</i>	Various	1					
Free Events subtotal			3	3	31,000	24,500		
<i>Touring and Outreach</i>								
<i>Schools Tours:</i>								
Victoria	<i>Hansel and Gretel</i>	Humperdinck	127			117		
New South Wales	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	Rossini	257			171		
<i>Regional Tour:</i>								
VIC, NSW, QLD, NT, WA	<i>The Magic Flute</i>	Mozart	17			17		
Touring and Outreach subtotal			401	305	85,422	85,746	770,251	1,144,813
<i>Other Events</i>								
Arts Centre Melbourne	<i>Behind the Scenes</i>		6					
Sydney Opera House	<i>Behind the Scenes</i>		4					
Other Events subtotal			10	2	1,774	7,126	26,799	405,300
Total Admissions - All Activities (excluding The Rabbits)			764	313	513,655	649,443		
<i>The Rabbits - presented by Perth International Arts Festival & Melbourne Festival:</i>								
Heath Ledger Theatre, State Theatre Centre, Perth	<i>The Rabbits</i>	Kate Miller-Heidke	9					
Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne	<i>The Rabbits</i>	Kate Miller-Heidke	8					
The Rabbits subtotal			17	2	10,713			

NP = New Production
* First performance of 2016 Summer Season on 30/12/15



Teddy Tahu Rhodes as Méphistophélès
Faust



Top: Community Choirs perform in Parramatta Park
Bottom: Schools Tour of *Cinderella*

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Opera Australia

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The liability of the members of Opera Australia is limited. Incorporated in New South Wales in 1970, Opera Australia is an authority holder under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991.

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