

## Rehearsals begin for the first opera on Sydney's Cockatoo Island: a rock 'n' roll inspired *Carmen*

November 25 – December 18, 2022 | Cockatoo Island



Rehearsals are underway for a bold new production of Bizet's *Carmen* opening on 25 November on Sydney's Cockatoo Island. A short 12 minute ferry ride from the city, this will be the first opera ever performed on the heritage-listed island.

Under the direction of the acclaimed Liesel Badorrek, a cast of brilliant singers and musicians, 12 contemporary dancers and 3 motorbike riders have begun weaving together the story of *Carmen*, who Liesel says is the ultimate femme fatale.

"This is *Carmen* as you've never seen it before. For me it is a story about misfits, fringe dwellers and outsiders and nothing says that like rock 'n' roll.

"Sydney's Cockatoo Island is an industrial and gritty place so we have taken that aesthetic to the next level with the sets and costumes to create a thrilling set. You will feel like you've entered our world of *Carmen* as soon as you step off the ferry, it really is going to be a unique experience," said director Liesel Badorrek.

Incorporating such a diverse range of elements, including motorcycles and nightly fireworks, is an exciting prospect for choreographer Shannon Burns, who previously worked on Opera Australia's Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour production of *La Traviata*.

"We are creating a new world and the dancers support that world with a dynamic display of unapologetic and expressive movement across multiple genres. Expect the unexpected. *Carmen* on Cockatoo Island will be an all-encompassing experience set against the stunning backdrop of Sydney Harbour," says choreographer Shannon Burns.

*Carmen* on Cockatoo Island offers a great value night at the opera with tickets priced between \$79 and \$149. Pop-up bars and dining will provide an all-inclusive evening out at one of Sydney's most unique locations.

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Minister for Tourism and the Arts Ben Franklin said Opera on Cockatoo Island was a great addition to Sydney's events calendar that would be a highlight for visitors over summer.

"Experiencing *Carmen* against the unique industrial backdrop of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Cockatoo Island will be a breathtaking experience. This will be a highlight of Sydney's summer events calendar and a major drawcard for visitors to Sydney," Mr Franklin said.

Audiences can travel to Cockatoo Island on the Opera Australia shuttle ferry running from King St Wharf which can be booked alongside performance tickets. The island is also accessible by public ferry or water taxi.

Proudly supported by the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency Destination NSW, *Carmen* on Cockatoo Island will be a spectacular harbour event and a once-in-a-lifetime opera experience.

Further information: [opera.org.au/carmen](http://opera.org.au/carmen)

*Carmen* on Cockatoo Island rehearsal images, video and available audio [linked here](#).

### Creatives

Conductor **Tahu Matheson**  
 Director **Liesel Badorrek**  
 Set & Costume Designer **Mark Thompson**  
 Lighting Designer **John Rayment**  
 Sound Designer **Tony David Cray**  
 Choreographer **Shannon Burns**  
 Assistant Director **Warwick Doddrell**

**Opera Australia Chorus**  
**Opera Australia Orchestra**

### Cast

Carmen **Carmen Topciu, Sian Sharp**  
 Don José **Roberto Aronica, Diego Torre**  
 Escamillo **Daniel Sumegi, Alexander Sefton**  
 Micaëla **Danita Weatherstone, Rebecca Gulinello**  
 Frasquita **Jane Ede, Esther Song**  
 Mercédès **Agnes Sarkis**  
 Remendado **Adam Player**  
 Dancairo **Alexander Hargreaves**  
 Zuniga **Richard Anderson**  
 Morales **Haotian Qi**

### Performance information

#### **Evenings at 7.45pm**

November 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, December 1, 2, 3, 4, 6,  
 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18

#### **Running time**

Approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes including one interval

#### **Performed in French with English surtitles**

#### **Bookings**

Performance tickets - adults from \$79 - \$149 (+ \$9.80 booking fee)  
 Ferry tickets can be booked separately when you purchase performance tickets

Opera Australia Box Office  
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[www.opera.org.au](http://www.opera.org.au)

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