

Media Release

19 September 2023

New Artistic Director announces first opera at Margaret Court Arena to mark Puccini's 100th Anniversary

Opera Australia's new Artistic Director Jo Davies today announced the Company will present an epic, fully staged production of *Tosca*, one of Puccini's most-loved operas, at Melbourne's Margaret Court Arena in May next year - the first opera to ever be staged in the venue.

Marking the centenary of the great Italian composer's death, *Tosca* at Margaret Court Arena is the first programming announcement by the incoming Artistic Director who officially takes up the creative reins in November this year.

It also signifies OA's commitment to securing new venues for its Victorian season when its traditional home, the State Theatre at Arts Centre Melbourne, undergoes a major upgrade as part of the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation project.

"I'm thrilled that my first announcement at Opera Australia is something bold, epic and a celebration of one of the most popular opera composers of all time, Giacomo Puccini," said Ms Davies.

"This classic 5-star production will be a very special event, bringing to life, in an exciting new setting, one of opera's most thrilling scores, with raise-the-roof chorus scenes, haunting arias and an action-packed plot, all of which will feel at once both epic and intimate.

"I'm excited that I'll soon be able to reveal the rest of the 2024 season in Victoria. Whilst the State Theatre is closed it's a great opportunity for OA to spread its creative wings and think about opera outside of traditional theatre spaces. This also means looking beyond the city to regional areas and presenting opera in new venues in exciting, innovative ways."

Minister for Creative Industries and Minister for Sport, Tourism and Major Events, Steve Dimopoulos said, "Melbourne's sports precinct is no stranger to performances from world class athletes – now it's time to raise the roof with the first-ever opera performance to be staged at the arena, Puccini's *Tosca*. We are a proud to help bring this unique production to Melbourne audiences and we look forward to seeing the arena burst to life like never before."

This hugely acclaimed production of *Tosca*, directed by Edward Dick for Opera North is brilliantly designed by the award-winning Tom Scutt to echo the grand stadium feel of Margaret Court Arena.

Focusing on the social and sexual politics of this incredible operatic thriller, this production perfectly blends old and new with Renaissance grandeur and elegant contemporary costumes by BAFTA winning costume designer Fotini Dimou.

This will be the first staging outside of the United Kingdom.

In the roles of complex diva Tosca and her lover Cavaradossi, Karah Son and Diego Torre will reunite on stage, the pair recently wowed audiences in *Madama Butterfly* on Sydney Harbour. Torre will share the role with rising Korean tenor Young Woo Kim, and baritones Robert Hayward and Warwick Fyfe will perform the role of Scarpia.

Opera North Music Director and Chief Conductor Garry Walker will conduct Puccini's sensational score, leading the internationally acclaimed Opera Australia Chorus and Orchestra Victoria through one of opera's most tragic love stories.

Ms Davies will officially commence in the role of Artistic Director in November 2023.

Opera Australia will announce its full 2024 Season on 24 October 2023.

“A corker of a show... staged imaginatively and cogently”

★★★★★ – **The Times**

“Ingenious... surprises, horrifies and thrills in equal measure”

★★★★ – **The Stage**

Creatives

Conductor **Garry Walker**

Director **Edward Dick**

Set Designer **Tom Scutt**

Costume Designer **Fotini Dimou**

Lighting Designer **Lee Curran**

Sound Designer **Jim Atkins**

Choreographer **Maxine Braham**

Performance information

May 24, 25, 28, 29, 30

Evenings at 7.30pm

May 26

Matinee at 1:00pm

Running time

Approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes including two intervals

Cast

Tosca **Karah Son**

Cavaradossi **Diego Torre, Young Woo Kim**

Scarpia **Robert Hayward, Warwick Fyfe**

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

Bookings

Adult tickets from \$59 (fees may apply)

Tickets go on sale Monday 2 October, 9am.

For priority pre-sale access to tickets before they go on sale to the general public, join the waitlist at opera.org.au/tosca

Opera Australia Chorus

Orchestra Victoria

Supporting Partner



Opera Australia Box Office
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