

MEDIA RELEASE

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Opera Australia Orchestra appoints new Concertmaster Matthieu Arama

Opera Australia today announced the appointment of French violinist Matthieu Arama as Concertmaster for the Opera Australia Orchestra (OAO) after a worldwide search. Mr Arama will join the OAO in August this year.

Currently Concertmaster of the orchestra of the Opéra National de Bordeaux, Mr Arama has performed as guest and soloist with some of the world's most renowned conductors.

Mr Arama will be responsible for leading the OAO to achieve artistic excellence throughout its extensive annual program of more than 250 performances of opera, ballet, musical theatre and concerts for OA and The Australian Ballet.

Recently Mr Arama performed as Guest Concertmaster for OA on *La Traviata* and *Swan Lake* with The Australian Ballet, and also delivered a solo recital including excerpts from opera and ballet repertoire as well as chamber music.

Acting Concertmaster Huy-Nguen Bui said, "The OAO is excited to welcome an exceptional violinist and musician as our new Concertmaster. We look forward to reaching the highest levels of music-making through Mr Arama's artistic leadership."

The appointment was also endorsed by OA CEO Fiona Allan, OA Artistic Director Jo Davies, The Australian Ballet's Music Director Jonathan Lo and a range of additional stakeholders.

"Mr Arama's appointment is brilliant news. He's an accomplished player and recognised orchestral leader and it was vital we found a Concertmaster befitting of the expert standard of OAO and each of our musicians, all of which the Company is very proud. I believe Mr Arama will be an inspiring leader and a fantastic ambassador for the OAO for both OA and The Australian Ballet," said Ms Davies.

Resident at the Sydney Opera House, the OAO is internationally recognised as an ensemble of the highest calibre performing with some of the world's finest conductors, vocal artists and dancers.

Mr Arama is thrilled to join the OAO, having set his sights on working at the Sydney Opera House since his first visit. "It's a dream come true, I feel very honoured and excited to join Opera Australia," he said.

See following page for bio.

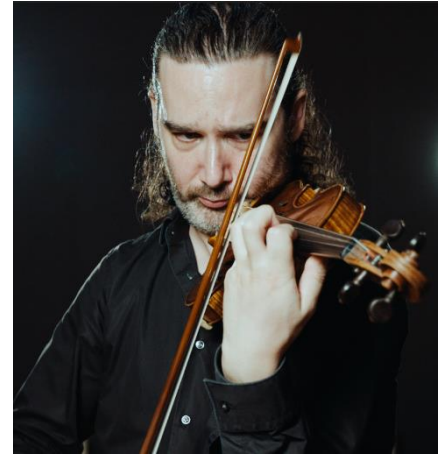
Media enquiries

Christy Seddon | Senior Publicist | + 61 411 675 490 | christy.seddon@opera.org.au

Matthieu Arama

Matthieu Arama began playing the violin at age six and made his debut as a soloist at Paris' Salle Gaveau at age eleven.

A few years later, he won the First Prize and the Alumni's Special Award from the Paris Conservatory (CNSM), where he studied with Sylvie Gazeau and José Alvarez. He then had the honor of being accepted into Igor Oistrakh's class at Brussels' Royal Conservatory, where he received his Master's Diploma with High Distinction. Igor Oistrakh has been his mentor, and his legacy continues to be a source of inspiration for him.



Matthieu has performed as a soloist in some of the world's greatest concert halls, including London's Barbican, Montréal's Salle Wilfrid Pelletier, Moscow Conservatory's Great Hall, San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House, Paris' Salle Gaveau and Salle Cortot, Bordeaux's Opera House and the Auditorium Dutilleux, and Cape Town's City Hall, with orchestras including the London Symphony, the Royal Philharmonic, the Montréal Symphony, the Ontario Philharmonic, The San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, the Real Filharmonía de Galicia, The Cape Town Philharmonic, the Lithuanian Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestre de l'Opéra National de Bordeaux.

Matthieu has played concertos and showpieces under the baton of renowned conductors, including Sir Andrew Davis, Maestro Domingo Hindoyan, Maestro Paul Daniel, Maestro Asher Fisch, Maestro Roberto Benzi, Maestro Shlomo Mintz, Maestro Karoui, Maestro Pierre Bleuse, Maestro Sascha Goetzel, and Maestro Kwamé Ryan.

He has also given recitals worldwide. Many of his performances have been broadcast by Radio Canada, CBC, Radio Classique, France Musique, France Inter, la Radio Suisse Romande, and Fox News.

His first album, "Violin Showcase" (including works by Paganini, Sarasate, Wieniawski...), released by Brilliant Classics, as well as his recording of the most beautiful violin solos from the Russian Ballet repertoire (Raymonda, Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty...) for the Label Actes Sud/Harmonia Mundi, received great reviews from critics (Fono Forum/Germany, Klassieke Zaken/Holland, Fanfare Magazine/USA, ResMusica/France). "Here is a violinist with a rich, full tone, reminiscent of Toscha Seidel or David Oistrakh" (Lynn René Bayley– Fanfare Magazine/USA.)

Matthieu has won several prizes and awards, including the Third Grand Prize in the Montréal International Violin Competition and the Bronze Medal in the London International Violin Competition (Benjamin Britten). He is also a laureate of the Yamaha Music Foundation Europe and Feydeau de Brou St Paul Scholarships given to the best string player of Paris Conservatory.

In 2009, Matthieu was appointed Concertmaster of the orchestra of Opéra National de Bordeaux, France's second-largest opera house. He has led major orchestras in France and many around the world, including the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, the Filarmonica della Scala di Milano, the Real Filharmonía de Galicia, and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

He is a Professor at the Pôle d'Enseignement Supérieur de Bordeaux-Aquitaine (Bordeaux University).

Matthieu Arama now plays the "Duc de Crémone" by Pietro Guarneri, kindly loaned by a generous benefactor.

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