

Media Release

28 June 2024

Opera superstar Nicole Car returns home for exclusive performances in Opera Australia's *Puccini Gala*



In two Melbourne-exclusive concerts, one of Australia's greatest operatic exports soprano **Nicole Car** returns home to Melbourne for her only Australian appearance this year, Opera Australia's *Puccini Gala* at Hamer Hall on 25 and 27 July.

Giacomo Puccini was a defining force in opera at the turn of the 20th century and many of his works are still the most-performed in opera houses around the world: *La Bohème*, *Turandot*, *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*.

Puccini has had a significant impact on Car; a production of *Tosca* by Opera Australia at Arts Centre Melbourne was her first taste of opera at age 17 and Mimì from *La Bohème* has become one of her signature roles having performed it over 50 times in more than 10 different cities, including at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and the Met, New York.

Car will be joined onstage by a powerhouse cast of singers, including Australians **Peter Coleman-Wright AO** and **Julie Lea Goodwin**, as well as the great Maltese tenor **Joseph Calleja**, in his debut performance with the company.

Also returning to Australia for this concert is celebrated Australian conductor Daniel Smith.

Smith says that the *Puccini Gala* will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the timeless magic of Puccini's work and that he is especially honoured to celebrate with audiences in Australia, his first return to the stage on home shores since conducting the Green Room Award winning *Il Viaggio a Reims* in 2019.

"Returning to Australia to conduct this Gala is a professional honour and a personal homecoming. As I live minutes from Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome where the Act 3 of *Tosca* is set, I am thrilled to share the passion, drama and exquisite beauty of Puccini's music with audiences in my home country." Smith said.

"Puccini's music, with its profound emotional depth and masterful orchestration, has a unique ability to touch the soul and transcend time. His works are a testament to the power of opera to convey the deepest human emotions and stories."

Smith will guide the cast and the superb Orchestra Victoria through some of Puccini's greatest arias as well as some of his lesser known gems in a splendid evening of opera.

The full repertoire for the *Puccini Gala* concert is available at opera.org.au/productions/the-puccini-gala-concert-melbourne/.

PATRON-IN-CHIEF
DR HARUHISA HANDA

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Creatives

Conductor **Daniel Smith**
 Director **Miranda Summers**
 Lighting Designer **Paul Jackson**

Cast

Soprano **Nicole Car**
 Baritone **Peter Coleman-Wright AO**
 Tenor **Joseph Calleja**
 Soprano **Julie Lea Goodwin**

Orchestra Victoria

Performance Information

25 July at 7.30pm
 and
27 July at 1.00pm

Running time

Approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes including 1 interval.
 Performed in Italian

Bookings

Adult tickets from \$69 (fees may apply)

Opera Australia Box Office
 (03) 9685 3700
www.opera.org.au

Hamer Hall, Arts Centre Melbourne
100 St Kilda Road, Melbourne

Hi-Res Images: opera.org.au/about/media-centre/melbourne

Website: opera.org.au/productions/the-puccini-gala-concert-melbourne/

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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