

MEDIA RELEASE

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Opera Australia announces CEO Fiona Allan's departure and acknowledges her contribution to the company's renewal and future success

Opera Australia Chair Rod Sims today announced that CEO Fiona Allan has decided to depart Opera Australia (OA) to pursue new opportunities after leading the company in its post-COVID revival of the performing arts sector.

Mr Sims thanked Ms Allan for her leadership of OA over the past three years, during a particularly challenging period for the sector and arts organisations around the globe.

"Fiona's tireless work has enabled the company to regain its momentum post-COVID and put in place a clear strategic direction for a sustainable future.

"Fiona has positioned OA well to continue its evolution in the complex environment in which all arts organisations are operating," Mr Sims said.

"The Board of Directors, the Executive Team, and our company of artists, creatives and arts workers express their gratitude to Fiona for her strong strategic leadership and exceptional efforts bringing OA back into production post-COVID, and for laying a solid foundation for OA to achieve its purpose to be an opera company for a 21st-century Australia.

"We wish Fiona all the very best in her future endeavours and look forward to the continued growth and renewal of the company," Mr Sims added.

Ms Allan said: "It has been a privilege and an honour to lead Australia's national opera company. After more than three deeply rewarding years as CEO, the time has come for me to explore new opportunities in cultural leadership while reconnecting with my international networks.

"During my tenure, I have been proud to work alongside the Board to develop a new strategic direction focused on championing Australian talent, empowering creative teams, and nurturing the next generation of artists and audiences.

"Some key achievements include collaborating with guest director Lindy Hume on the summer 2024 program, which marked an exciting evolution in Opera Australia's artistic approach; the establishment of a new Young Artist Program, and meaningful progress in education and participation initiatives that have strengthened connections with communities across the country.

"On stage, highlights of my tenure include the unforgettable *Ring Cycle* in Brisbane, *Lohengrin* featuring Jonas Kaufmann, and the launch of the free *BMW Opera for All* series in Melbourne's Fed Square. I'm also proud of initiatives like *Opera Up Late*, which premiered during World Pride 2023 and has since become a beloved annual event.

"What has inspired me most, however, are the extraordinary people of Opera Australia. From our Executive Team, gifted musicians, singers, and creative teams to the dedicated professionals working behind the scenes, it has been a privilege to collaborate with such talented and passionate individuals.

"It has been an honour to serve Opera Australia, and I am excited to watch its continued growth and success in the years ahead."

OA's Chief Operating Officer, Simon Militano has been appointed Acting CEO until a permanent appointment can be made. Mr Militano has acted as Opera Australia CEO on previous occasions. The Board will commence an immediate search to appoint a permanent CEO.

OA will continue to pursue excellence on stage during its widely acclaimed 2025 season, with *La Traviata*, *Cinderella*, *Great Opera Hits* and *The Barber of Seville* all on now at Sydney Opera House. Programming for 2026 is confirmed, and planning for seasons beyond is well underway.

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