

O | A YOUNG
ARTIST
PROGRAM

GERMAN OPERA SCENES

Friday 11 April, 7pm
Warwick Fairfax Studio

O | PERA AUSTRALIA | A

German Opera Scenes

Friday 11 April 2025, 7pm
Warwick Fairfax Studio, The Opera Centre

CREATIVE TEAM

Claudia Osborne*, Director
Francis Greep, Music Director
Jem Herbert*, Répétiteur
Tanja Bingelli, German Language Coach

PRODUCTION

Jane Hennessy, Young Artist Producer
Dominic Jones, Production Manager
Alex Lynn, Head of Lighting
William Dunshea, Head of Store, Sydney
Sammie Bailey, Young Artist Coordinator
Bec Moret, Surtitles Operator

CAST

Chelsea Burns*, Soprano
Lyla Levy-Jordan, Mezzo-soprano
Shikara Ringdahl*, Mezzo-soprano
Elias Wilson*, Tenor
Leon Vitogiannis*, Baritone
Richard Anderson, Bass
**Opera Australia Young Artist*

PROGRAM

W.A. Mozart	Die Zauberflöte Act 1 Hm! hm! hm! hm!	Papageno: Leon Vitogiannis Tamino: Elias Wilson Erste Dame: Chelsea Burns Zweite Dame: Lyla Levy-Jordan Dritte Dame: Shikara Ringdahl Priest: Richard Anderson
	Die Zauberflöte Act 2 Wie? wie? wie?	
Richard Wagner	Tannhäuser Act 3 Wohl wusst'ich hier sie im Gebet ... Allmächtige Jungfrau, hör mein Flehen ... Wie Todesahnung	Wolfram: Leon Vitogiannis Elizabeth: Chelsea Burns
Richard Wagner	Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg Act 1 Verweilt! Ein Wort! ein einzig Wort!	Walter von Stolzing: Elias Wilson Eva: Chelsea Burns Magdalena: Shikara Ringdahl David: Leon Vitogiannis
	Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg Act 2 Am stillen Herd in Winterszeit	Walter von Stolzing: Elias Wilson Hans Sachs/Fritz Kothner: Richard Anderson Sixtus Beckmesser: Leon Vitogiannis Kunz Vogelgesang: Lyla Levy-Jordan
Richard Wagner	Lohengrin Act 1 Bist du es, Elsa von Brabant ... Einsam in trüben Tagen	King Heinrich der Vogler: Richard Anderson Elsa von Brabant: Chelsea Burns Friedrich von Telramund: Leon Vitogiannis
	Lohengrin Act 2 Euch Lüften, die mein Klagen ... Entweihte Götter ... Ortrud! wo bist du?	Elsa von Brabant: Chelsea Burns Ortrud: Shikara Ringdahl Friedrich von Telramund: Leon Vitogiannis
Ludwig van Beethoven	Fidelio Act 1 Mir ist so wunderbar	Marzelline: Chelsea Burns Leonora: Shikara Ringdahl Rocco: Leon Vitogiannis Jaquino: Elias Wilson

OPERA AUSTRALIA IS PROUD TO LAUNCH THE NEXT CHAPTER OF OUR YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM,
GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY PRINCIPAL PATRON MAUREEN WHEELER AO.

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DR HARUHISA HANDA

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About the Artists



Claudia Osborne is a director, writer and dramaturg. Claudia's work on stage and screen is heavily influenced by her visual arts training, often working in an image-led capacity, drawing on her background in visual arts to create distinctive theatrical landscapes. In 2014, torn between studying Creative Writing or Sculpture and Performance Art she began a double degree in Fine Arts and Arts at UNSW and UNSW Art and Design (formally COFA). In 2019 she completed a MFA in Directing for Performance at NIDA. Since then, Claudia has worked with Belvoir St Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, Griffin Theatre Company and Bell Shakespeare. Claudia was a 2022 Gloria Payten and Gloria Dawn Foundation Fellow, giving her the opportunity to travel to Germany to work with Lydia Steir and the Berlin Philharmonic on Strauss's *Die Frau Ohne Schatten*. What began as an observational role quickly turned into a formal assistant directing position – a true baptism by fire. In 2020, Claudia was one of four emerging practitioners who completed a three-month theatre residency as part of the Create NSW and Griffin Theatre Company Incubator Fellowship. In 2024, Claudia wrote and directed her first short film, *Rash*, which premiered at the Festival des Antipodes, Saint-Tropez, in October. In 2025, she will direct/co-create Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *Life Is A Dream* across the road at Belvoir's downstairs theatre.



Francis Greep is a highly sought-after vocal coach, recitalist, music director, and chorus master. He has worked extensively with Opera Australia and held key positions at West Australian Opera and Houston Grand Opera. Most recently, he served as Executive Director of The Song Company, Australia's national vocal ensemble. Francis rejoined Opera Australia last year as Head of Young Artists. Internationally recognised for his expertise in preparing singers across classical styles, he brings a deep understanding of vocal production, languages, repertoire, and performance psychology. He holds postgraduate degrees in collaborative piano and opera from the University of Cincinnati, as well as a PhD from the University of Melbourne, where his groundbreaking research explores the role of the vocal coach in the development of emerging singers.



Jem Herbert, originally from Mansfield in north-east Victoria, grew up learning cello and piano. At age 8, he joined the Australian Boys' Choir, sparking a lifelong love for vocal and choral music. He attended the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS), gaining early operatic experience in concert performances of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. A versatile musician, Jem also studied composition and conducting, graduating with top music awards. He later completed a Piano Performance degree at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, earning first-class honours. While at university, he sang with the Choir of Trinity College, Melbourne, becoming the Conducting Scholar and received commissions for chapel and concert works. In 2022, Jem composed *Mageia: A Musical Fable* for Trinity's 250th anniversary—blending opera, operetta, and Broadway—which deepened his passion for theatrical music, especially opera. Bringing together his skills as pianist, singer, composer, and conductor, the role of répétiteur felt like a natural fit. In 2024, he returned to the Conservatorium for a Graduate Diploma in Opera Performance, working on Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief* and conducting Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. He also composed a mini-opera for the students titled *Eulogies and Entanglements*.



Tanja Binggeli is a highly respected voice and German language coach based in Berlin. From 2007 to 2020, she was the German Language Coach at Opera Australia before relocating to Germany. Despite the move, she continues to return regularly to Sydney to work with Simone Young as the German Language Coach for operatic projects with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Over the course of her career, Tanja has collaborated with most major Australian classical music companies and tertiary institutions and coached both Australian and international artists in the major works of the German repertoire. Tanja is passionate about working with singers, committed to helping them sing with freedom while cultivating rich interpretations and a deep enjoyment of both text and music.



Chelsea Burns comes from country Western Australia and never imagined opera would be a part of her life. She grew up playing sport with her father and singing in choirs and musicals with her mother and sister. A transformative event for her was the day she saw a touring production of Opera Australia's *Carmen*. She was blown away by the music, the voices and the spectacle. Pursuing a degree in Classical Music had her falling in love with opera, the music's story-telling and the complex characters, a passion that was singled out and fostered by her acting teacher. This is one of the reasons that she so admires the artistry of Maria Callas, a true singing actress. Chelsea has been lucky enough to sing and cover some amazing roles, her favourites; Puccini's *Tosca* and Dvorak's *Rusalka*. In 2024, Chelsea was able to draw on her extensive dance training as she also performed as the Second Wood Nymph in a heavily choreographed production of *Rusalka*.



Australian-French mezzo-soprano **Lyla Levy-Jordan** is a graduate of the Artist Masters program at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. At Guildhall, she performed roles including Cornelia (*Giulio Cesare*), Lucretia (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Dritte Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), and Mrs Tracey (*The Voice of Ariadne*). Other highlights include Annio (*La Clemenza di Tito*, Pacific Opera), Marcellina (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, Willoughby Symphony) and covering the role of Fairy in the world premiere of Simon Bruckard's *The Selfish Giant* (Victorian Opera). A passionate recitalist, she has performed at the Pierre Boulez Saal, Melbourne Recital Centre and Barbican Centre; appeared with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Hall with Sir Antonio Pappano in Dallapiccola's *Il Prigioniero*. In 2022/23, she was a member of the Liedakademie at Heidelberger Frühling Liedzentrum. Lyla's recent accolades include the Lady Galleghan Award (Opera Foundation for Young Australians), Winner of the Chartered Surveyors Vocal Prize (Guildhall), and Runner Up in The Great Romantics Competition. She is generously supported by Help Musicians UK, The Ian Potter Cultural Trust, and The Hazell Scholarship Fund.



Shikara Ringdahl a Chinese-Australian mezzo-soprano, is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU) and holds a Bachelor of Music. She made her professional debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra singing Elgar's *Sea Pictures* Op. 37 under the baton of Benjamin Northey and was the first vocalist invited by the SSO to tour with the orchestra in their 80 years of regional touring. Shikara was a Young Artist with Opera Queensland in 2023/2024 and has previously been a resident Young Artist with the Israeli Opera's Meitar Opera Studio. For Opera Queensland Shikara has appeared in the statewide tour of "Do We Need Another Hero?", Festival of Outback Opera, as Second Witch in *Dido and Aeneas* and as Second Apparition in *Macbeth*. She has also performed with the OQ chorus in *Macbeth*, *Così fan tutte*, *Aida*, *Dido and Aeneas* and *Eucalyptus*. Shikara's other opera credits include Der Komponist in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* conducted by Simone Young AM, Larina in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* conducted by Richard Hetherington, and Mrs Herring in Britten's *Albert Herring*, directed by Bruce Beresford for QCGU and Brisbane Festival.



First Nations tenor **Elias Wilson** grew up in Western Sydney with parents who were children's entertainers. Between learning his mother's choreography at community musical theatre rehearsals and school holidays spent helping his father stage manage the live shows of Play School and Bananas in Pajamas, theatre was part of his every day. Despite this influence, Elias wasn't bitten by the showbiz bug until he was 22 when, having never seen an opera, George Torbay cast him in the chorus of *La Traviata* at Opera New England. The music had him hooked, and he knew right away he had to quit his call-centre job to enroll at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Elias studied with Dr Rowena Cowley, and sang everything from Monteverdi to Musical Theatre. He finds the joy of music and opera in its diversity, and has since played classic romantic roles like Lysander and Nemorino, channeled gravitas and turmoil as an Elder in *The Visitors* or in excerpts of Peter Grimes, and relished the fun of rule-breaking character roles, adapting *Cendrillon*'s stepmother for Tenor as a monstrous bearded drag queen. In every role Elias finds something personal – a part of himself to take with him, on-stage and off.



Leon Vitogiannis is establishing himself as one of the most exciting baritones of his generation. After completing degrees at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music with Mr. Andrew Dalton and Dr. David Greco, Leon continues to build an impressive list of stage and concert credits. Leon's stage credits include; Figaro (*The Barber of Seville*), Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*), Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*), Count Almaviva (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), and Mr. McC. in (*Introductions and Goodbyes*) by Foss. His concert appearances include *Requiem* (Mozart and Fauré), *Messiah* (Handel), *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Brahms), *Paulus* (Mendelssohn), *Crucifixion* (Stainer), and the Australian premiere of *Requiem for an Angel* (Carr). As Leon continues to expand his opera and oratorio repertoire, he also holds Lieder and Art Song to equal importance, focusing on the song cycles of Schubert, Schumann, and Mahler. Leon held a position as a Young Artist with Pacific Opera Studio in 2023 and 2024, working closely under Co-Artistic Directors, Cheryl Barker AO and Peter Coleman-Wright AO. Most recently, Leon was selected as an Opera Australia Young Artist in their 2025-2026 program.



Richard Anderson, born in Sydney, is a distinguished bass who studied at the Canberra School of Music and was part of Opera Australia's Young Artist Program. His extensive repertoire with Opera Australia includes notable roles such as Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Figaro and Bartolo (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Colline (*La bohème*), Angelotti (*Tosca*), Raimondo (Lucia di Lammermoor), Lodovico (*Otello*), Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Ferrando (*Il Trovatore*), Doctor (Wozzeck), Der Alte (*Ghost Sonata*), Krishna/Rustomgi (*Satyagraha*), Ormondo (*Partenope*), Achilla (*Giulio Cesare*), Swallow (*Peter Grimes*), and Quince (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). Richard has also performed with other companies, including the title role in *The Mikado*, Rocco (*Fidelio*, Opera Queensland), Ashby (*La fanciulla del West*, State Opera of South Australia), Achis (*David et Jonathan*, Pinchgut Opera), Ariadeno (*L'Ormino*), Anacréon (*Anacréon*), and Don Chilone (*Erghihetta and Don Chilone*, Pinchgut Opera). He appears in the recording of *David et Jonathan* (Pinchgut Opera) as Achis.

Thank you to Guest Artist Tanja Binggeli for her inspiring coaching.

UPCOMING YOUNG ARTIST PERFORMANCES

Elias Wilson & Leon Vitogiannis star in

Rossini in Paris

Saturday 17 May, 2pm
Sydney Opera House

French Opera Scenes

Wednesday 11 June, 7pm
The Opera Centre

French Song Recital

with Guest Artist Marie-France Lefebvre
Sunday 15 June, 3pm
The Church, Alexandria

Italian Opera Scenes

Directed by Guest Artist Stefano Vizioli
Monday 28 July, 7pm
The Opera Centre

Great Opera Hits

Wednesday 30 July, 7pm
Melbourne Opera Centre

Great Opera Hits

Sunday 3 August, 2pm
Sydney Opera House

For ticket information and upcoming performances email
youngartistprogram@opera.org.au