

Opera Australia appoints internationally acclaimed conductor Maestro Andrea Battistoni to Music Director role

After an extensive world-wide search Opera Australia (OA) today announced the appointment of in-demand Italian conductor and composer Maestro Andrea Battistoni as the company's new Music Director, commencing in January 2026.

Outgoing OA Chair Rod Sims said the appointment was a thrilling and essential development in the rebuilding of the company's artistic leadership.

"Andrea's combination of youth, artistry, and international experience has established him as a hugely respected conductor globally. His highly anticipated appointment will be invaluable to OA's continuing evolution and commitment to innovation and artistic excellence," he said.

Battistoni is recognised as one of the most esteemed conductors of his generation, a regular on the podium in the world's finest opera houses such as Covent Garden, Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Palau del Les Arts in Valencia, Royal Opera House in Stockholm, Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa and the Sydney Opera House.

First attracting international attention at the Verdi Festival in 2010, Battistoni became the youngest conductor to perform at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan in 2012 at only 24 years of age. From 2014 to 2016, he was first guest conductor at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa, and since 2016 he has held the position of principal conductor at the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra amongst other high-profile appointments.

Having worked regularly with OA over the past ten years, Battistoni's conducting credits with the company have included *Tosca*, *Aida*, *Mefistofele*, *Il Trovatore* and *Attila*, attracting high praise from critics, audiences and performers alike. He will return to the Joan Sutherland Theatre orchestra pit in January 2026 to conduct Moffatt Oxenbould's *Madama Butterfly* and a new production of *Turandot* by Ann Yee.

Maestro Battistoni said, "I'm looking forward to returning to Australia and reuniting with colleagues with whom I shared deep musical communication and understanding. The extraordinary dedication of the music staff, the chorus, the orchestra and the soloists, they are constantly challenging themselves to create unforgettable performances.

"While recognising the value and strength of the Italian repertoire, which will continue to be an essential component, I propose an expansion into other musical cultures. We will aim to offer new stimuli to the audience, the orchestra and the chorus, allowing them to explore different musical languages, from Wagner to Britten, from the French masterpieces to new contemporary works.

"It's also important OA maintains its status as an international house of excellence reaching for new horizons. I'll be nurturing local talent as well as attracting international singers and directors with whom to share important projects.

"Innovating the repertoire, optimising production, promoting excellence and cultivating emerging talent will all be pillars of my activity at OA," he said.

Battistoni's role will be integral to maintaining the company's incredibly artistic standards, overseeing all musical aspects of OA's productions. He will be working closely with the yet to be appointed Director of Opera on all future programming to achieve the company's artistic vision.

Battistoni will spend three months of the year working with OA, dividing his time between other commitments; Music Director at Teatro Regio of Turin, Chief Conductor at Tokyo Philharmonic and Composer in Residence at Opér Royal de Wallonie-Liège.

When not in Australia Maestro Battistoni will be in at least weekly contact with OA to assist with all artistic endeavours.

Battistoni's appointment comes at a time of strengthened leadership at OA with the announcement of Professor Glyn Davis AC commencing as Chair and Alex Budd as the Company's new CEO starting in November 2025.



Andrea Battistoni

Born in Verona in 1987, Andrea Battistoni is widely recognised as one of the most dynamic and internationally acclaimed conductors of his generation. His career took off in the mid-2000s, following early musical studies in cello and composition, and quickly led to debuts with major opera houses and orchestras worldwide.

A breakthrough came in 2010 at the Verdi Festival in Parma with *Attila*, where his dramatic flair and musical insight earned both critical and public acclaim. In 2012, at just 24, he became the youngest conductor in the history of Teatro alla Scala, Milan, debuting with *Le Nozze di Figaro* and soon after leading the Filarmonica della Scala in symphonic repertoire.

Battistoni has conducted in many of the world's leading venues, including Deutsche Oper Berlin, Mariinsky Theatre St. Petersburg, Palau de les Arts Valencia, Semperoper Dresden, Royal Opera Stockholm, the Sydney Opera House, Teatro San Carlo Naples, Teatro La Fenice Venice, Teatro Regio Turin, Arena di Verona, and the Opéra Bastille in Paris.

His operatic repertoire spans Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Mozart, and beyond, with acclaimed productions such as *Otello*, *Rigoletto*, *Aida*, *Carmen*, *Macbeth*, *Tosca*, *La Bohème*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Turandot*.

On the symphonic stage, he has appeared with prestigious orchestras including the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Filarmonica della Scala, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Israel Philharmonic, Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Tokyo Philharmonic.

His work reflects a commitment to making music accessible beyond traditional venues, from performing in city squares to outdoor concerts in the mountains.

He has held prominent posts as First Guest Conductor of Teatro Regio di Parma (2010–2013), Principal Conductor of Teatro Carlo Felice, Genoa (2013–2019), and since January 2025, Music Director of Teatro Regio in Turin, one of Italy's most prestigious opera houses.

Renowned for his passionate, theatrical style and broad repertoire, Andrea Battistoni continues to be an in-demand guest across Europe, Asia, Australia, and the Americas, bringing Italian operatic and orchestral traditions to the world stage.

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