

MEDIA RELEASE

4 December 2025

Opera Australia celebrates 100 years of Puccini's *Turandot* with unmissable new production



Marking 100 years since it first premiered, Opera Australia is thrilled to present a spectacular, brand-new production of Puccini's final and iconic opera *Turandot*, by International Director and Choreographer Ann Yee, opening at the Sydney Opera House on 15 January.

Produced by Australia's national Opera Conference and presented with Sydney Festival, this exciting new staging features monumental sets, immersive visuals, a huge cast and enthralling choreography to create a grand spectacle that powerfully portrays a story of strength and resilience.

Audiences will be mesmerised as the most recognised aria ever written, 'Nessun dorma' — with its spine-tingling top notes made famous by Pavarotti's World Cup performance — rings out in this unmissable theatrical event.

Ann Yee, whose choreography has been featured in Olivier and Tony nominated shows, makes her Australian debut as director, taking inspiration from contemporary influences to bring a new perspective to the century old story. Collaborating with Yee is an incredibly talented team of creatives including award winning set designer Elizabeth Gadsby, costume designer David Fleischer and lighting designer Paul Jackson. Chinese-American artist, Andrew Thomas Huang, whose work spans sculptures, films and music videos, directing for the likes of Charli XCX, Bjork and FKA Twigs, the latter earning him a Grammy Nomination in 2019, has also been brought on to create an avatar of the titular character for this new production.

Taking on the title role are two of Australia's most dramatic sopranos, Rebecca Nash who makes her long awaited homecoming from The Metropolitan Opera in New York followed by Anna-Louise Cole who last performed in *The Ring Cycle* to critical acclaim. South Korean tenor Young Woo Kim who shone as Don José in *Carmen* last winter returns to make his role debut as Calaf, sharing the role with Diego Torre and Rosario La Spina.

They'll be joined onstage by the incredible Opera Australia Chorus, Children's Chorus and dancers while from the pit the Opera Australia Orchestra will be expertly led by some of the world's finest conductors; first Henrik Nánási in his Australian debut, followed by Nicholas Milton, Opera Australia's Music Director Andrea Battistoni and finally Tahu Matheson, Opera Australia's Head of Music.

In true Puccini style, *Turandot* is atmospheric, composed of big, sweeping, dramatic music that is intensely moving. The largest choral piece in his repertoire, the score also draws on traditional Chinese music with the orchestra featuring 13 tuned Chinese gongs and percussion instruments including tubular bells and an on-stage wood block.

Turandot tells the story of a fierce and loyal princess who challenges any suitor wishing to marry her to answer three riddles. Failure to do so correctly results in death. This production seeks to understand this central character, her relationship with her own ancestry, and the transformative effect of love.

Although Puccini famously never finished *Turandot*, dying two years before it premiered, it is regarded as one of his greatest works and is a beloved staple of the repertoire.

15 January – 27 March | Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House

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Creatives

Conductor **Henrik Nánási** (15 Jan – 10 Feb)

Nichola Milton (13 – 27 Feb)

Andrea Battistoni (4 – 13 Mar)

Tahu Matheson (16 – 27 Mar)

Director/Choreographer **Ann Yee**

Set Designer **Elizabeth Gadsby**

Costume Designer **David Fleischer**

Lighting Designer **Paul Jackson**

Video Designer **Andrew Thomas Huang**

Associate Choreographer **Charmene Yap**

Chinese Consultants **Prof Jing Han**

Dr Xiaohuan Zhao

Cast

Turandot **Rebecca Nash** (15 Jan – 10 Feb)

Anna Louise Cole (13 Feb – 27 Mar)

Calaf **Young Woo Kim** (15 Jan – 10 Feb)

Diego Torre (13 Feb – 16 Mar)

Rosario La Spina (21 Feb – 27 Mar)

Liu **Maria Teresa Leva** (15 Jan – 10 Feb)

Jennifer Black (13 Feb – 27 Mar)

Timur **Richard Anderson**

P1 - Ping **Luke Gabbedy** (15 Jan – 2 Feb)

Andrew Moran (5 Feb – 27 Mar)

P2 - Pong **John Longmuir** (15 Jan–10 Feb)

Iain Henderson (13 Feb–27 Mar)

P3 - Pang **Michael Petruccelli** (15 Jan–10 Feb)

Virgilio Marino (13 Feb–27 Mar)

Speaker **Shane Lawrencev**

Emperor **Gregory Brown**

Attendant **Annabelle Chaffey**

Leah Thomas

The Prince **Thomas Dalton**

Opera Australia Orchestra

Opera Australia Chorus

Opera Australia Children's Chorus

Opera Australia Dancers

This production of *Turandot* is by the Opera Conference, Australia's national partnership of professional opera companies.

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Performance information

Evenings at 7:30pm

Jan 15, 17, 23, 28, 31

Feb 2, 5, 7, 10, 13, 18, 24, 27

Mar 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 23, 27

Matinees at 12:30pm

Feb 21

Mar 21

Matinees at 2:00pm

Jan 25

Running time

Approximately 2 hours and 25 minutes including one interval.

Performed in Italian with English surtitles

This production contains adult themes.

Bookings

Adult tickets from \$79 (fees may apply)

Opera Australia Box Office
(02) 9318 8200
www.opera.org.au

**Joan Sutherland Theatre,
Sydney Opera House**