

MEDIA RELEASE

16 July 2026

Opera Australia celebrates Dame Joan Sutherland's centenary with *La Stupenda*



Opera Australia's (OA) winter season will come to a stunning conclusion with *La Stupenda: A Joan Sutherland Celebration*, a tribute to one of the greatest voices in operatic history in what would have been the year of her 100th Birthday.

Held in the theatre that bears her name at the Sydney Opera House, this star-studded concert hosted by Laura Tingle will commemorate Dame Joan Sutherland's astonishing technique, extraordinary musicality and impossibly perfect high notes that cemented her enduring legacy. From her 1965 Australian tour with Richard Bonyng AC BCE and a young Luciana Pavarotti to her farewell performances in 1990, audiences will be able to relive the music that defined the art form and inspired generations of singers.

Leading the tribute is internationally acclaimed Australian soprano Jessica Pratt, who credits Sutherland as her greatest inspiration, and is widely regarded as an artistic descendant of the Dame. Like Sutherland before her, Pratt has become a prominent figure in Italy and Spain, with a repertoire that mirrors the great Australian soprano's most demanding and beloved roles. Famously, she followed Sutherland as the third Australian to sing *Lucia di Lammermoor* at La Scala.

Pratt will be joined by Australian-Chinese tenor Kang Wang, who returns to OA following his acclaimed Rodolfo in last year's *La Bohème*, and Slovak baritone Dalibor Jenis, fresh from his performances in the title role of *Rigoletto*.

Of this momentous event, Opera Australia CEO Alex Budd said, "Dame Joan Sutherland is inseparable from the history of Opera Australia. Her artistry transformed the possibilities of opera in this country, and her international triumphs gave generations of Australian singers the confidence to imagine a career on the world stage. In Opera Australia's 70th year, and on the centenary of her birth, it is fitting that we honour not only the magnificence of her voice, but the example she set: of artistic courage, technical mastery and an enduring commitment to Australian opera. Jessica Pratt's return home to lead this celebration carries particular meaning. She stands in a great Australian bel canto tradition shaped by Dame Joan, while bringing to it an artistry entirely her own."

Together with the full force of the OA Chorus and Orchestra, the soloists will be led from the podium by one of the most exciting musical figures of our time, Speranza Scappucci. She makes her highly anticipated Australian debut following impressive credentials as the first female conductor at the Vienna State Opera and Royal Opera Covent Garden and the first Italian woman to conduct at Teatro all Scala.

PATRON-IN-CHIEF
DR HARUHISA HANDA

HERO PARTNER

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A spectacular tribute to an opera icon, *La Stupenda* is both a homecoming and a celebration, honouring Dame Joan Sutherland's amazing gift and contribution to opera in Australia and around the world that continues to live on and inspire.

20 August & 22 August | Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Creatives

Conductor **Speranza Scappucci**

Director **Stuart Maunder AM**

Lighting Designer **Alex Lynn**

Host

Laura Tingle

Cast

Jessica Pratt

With

Kang Wang

Dalibor Jenis

Caitlin Hulcup

And

Jennifer Black

Jane Ede

Sidra Nissen

John Longmuir

Luke Gabbedy

David Parkin

Shane Lawrence

Jake Lyle

Opera Australia Orchestra

Opera Australia Chorus

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Performance information

20 August at 7:30pm

22 August at 12:30pm

Running time

Approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes including one interval.

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**