

Opera Australia announces 2027 season



Opera Australia (OA) today announced its 2027 program featuring an array of works across the centuries and across genres. It will be a season where extraordinary music and storytelling are brought into vivid focus with works by some of the world's greatest composers.

From the unrelenting intensity of Wagner to the breathtaking melodic beauty of Puccini and the rollicking rhythms of Gilbert and Sullivan, it is a season of contrasts and broad audience appeal across a variety of distinct musical languages.

OA's Director of Planning and Programming, Ruth Thomas, who has spearheaded the season planning process over recent years said "We're really excited to be presenting the 2027 season - a program we feel is a great balance of Australian and international productions and talent.

"It's the first season where we've had the benefit of the international connections and experience of our Music Director Andrea Battistoni and our incoming Director of Opera Amy Lane, ahead of her official start in September."

New productions will be staged alongside beloved works from OA's celebrated repertoire. New partnerships will combine with ongoing and valued cultural collaborations to deliver a range of experiences of emotional depth and lasting impressions.

OA continues to champion Australian talent on and off the stage. Constantine Costi's new production of Puccini's *La Bohème* and Sir Jonathan Mills' *Eucalyptus* both make their Sydney Opera House debuts, while rising stars Alexandra Flood, Nina Korbe, Gemma Nha and Samantha Clark will all make OA role debuts.

From the international stage, premiering in Sydney will be Scottish Opera's fabulously creative 'steampunk' production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* by widely respected UK baritone turned director, Sir Thomas Allen. While the legendary Sir David McVicar will deliver a masterclass in directing with the world premiere of his new staging of *Tannhäuser* at Arts Centre Melbourne.

Incoming Director of Opera Amy Lane said, "I'm very much looking forward to working with Music Director Andrea Battistoni and the OA team to deliver the 2027 program.

"We have some really wonderful performers making their Australian debuts, and some thrilling productions that you'll be seeing for the first time, not least being Sir David McVicar's new *Tannhäuser* in Melbourne - his work is always so inspiring, and this production showcases once more the outstanding creativity and dramatic depths that he is so renowned for."

Music Director Andrea Battistoni, who will conduct in both Sydney and Melbourne in 2027 said, "We're presenting a diverse repertoire spanning centuries of music, not just for the sake of variety itself, but to offer-up to our patrons the sheer delight of immersing in different operatic styles and languages, from intense drama to comedy, from belcanto to verismo and beyond."

Sydney Season

In addition to the premieres of Constantine Costi's *La Bohème* and Scottish Opera's *The Magic Flute*, Sydney Summer will have some distinctly Australian elements with the return of Simon Phillip's delightfully Aussie take on Donizetti's *Elixir of Love* where corrugated iron reigns supreme, followed by the Sydney premiere of Sir Jonathan Mills *Eucalyptus*, based on Murray Bail's beloved novel.

Sydney's Winter season will see the return of a classic Sir David McVicar production, Gounod's *Faust*, with in-demand German conductor Nikolas Nägele at the helm. This will be followed by the Australian premiere of Verdi's *A Masked Ball (Un ballo in maschera)* direct from the Verdi Festival in Parma, a co-production by the Teatro Comunale di Bologna and the Teatro Regio di Parma.

Gilbert and Sullivan's swashbuckling *Pirates of Penzance* and a double bill of French masterpieces *La Voix Humaine* & *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* will round out the mainstage Sydney Opera House season.

Melbourne

The Melbourne 2027 season will herald a welcome return to full repertory programming in the newly refurbished Ian Potter State Theatre and feature an entire season of premieres.

The pinnacle will be the exclusive-to-Melbourne, Wagnerian event of the year: the world premiere of OA's first new production of *Tannhäuser* in three decades, by one of the world's most celebrated opera directors, Sir David McVicar.

Making his conducting debut in Melbourne as OA's Music Director, Maestro Battistoni said "*Tannhäuser* in Melbourne will be one of the defining productions of the 2027 season. I've admired Sir David McVicar's work for many years, and I'm delighted to collaborate with him for the first time on such a gigantic piece."

Also new to Melbourne is Ann Yee's bold and monumental staging of *Turandot*, co-produced by the Opera Conference; Sir Thomas Allen's acclaimed take on *The Magic Flute*; and Leah Purcell's operatic adaptation *The Drover's Wife - the Opera*, composed by George Palmer, where First Nations storytelling meets traditional opera.

In concert, the Opera Australia Chorus will appear in full force joined by Orchestra Victoria and led by Maestro Battistoni for a Melbourne exclusive, one night only, electrifying performance of the famous Beethoven Symphony No.9.

Touring

OA will continue its National Tour with Mozart's *Don Giovanni* by renowned director Michael Gow. Co-produced by the Opera Conference, the 2027 tour is heading to the Northern Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, and the ACT delivering exceptional operatic experiences to regional communities.

Continuing OA's partnership with Musica Viva, 2027 provides a rare opportunity to see "Opera Singer of the Year" (Opus Klassik Awards) mezzo-soprano Lea Desandre, who will make her Australian solo debut, alongside partner, Thomas Dunford, providing sunny harmonies and captivating lute solos in **Desandre & Dunford**, to be performed in the intimate settings of Melbourne Recital Centre and Sydney's City Recital Hall in October.

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OA is deeply grateful for the continued support of its generous donors and corporate partners, and for the sustained investment from federal and state governments that allows the national opera company to bring these exceptional experiences of music and song to our stages.

**** See following pages for a more detailed summary of all productions in 2027 ****

Bookings

Opera Australia subscriptions available now.

Prices start at \$126 for two operas.

Single tickets on sale from 29 September 2026

Opera Australia Box Office

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SYDNEY SUMMER 2027

LA BOHÈME - Puccini | Conductors **Andrea Battistoni** | **Matteo Dal Maso** | Director **Constantine Costi**

Sydney Premiere One of Australia's most exciting young directors, Constantine Costi brings his fresh new take of this timeless opera to the Sydney Opera House. Set in the snow-kissed backdrop of Paris, this must-see production breathes new life into the opera that has inspired countless bohemian love stories. *La Bohème* captures the raw emotion of Puccini's iconic score that will remind you of the power of love, beauty of youth and the sheer joy of being alive. OA's esteemed Music Director and award-winning conductor, Andrea Battistoni will lead a series of stellar local and international singers. Italian soprano Maria Teresa Leva returns to Sydney after wowing audiences in *Turandot* to star as Mimi, along with local favourites Jennifer Black, and Samantha Clarke making her role debut, while rising Italian tenor Matteo Desole makes his OA debut as Rodolfo sharing the role with Paride Cataldo and Iain Henderson. **Sydney Opera House, 2 January – 17 March and New Years Eve Performance on 31 December 2026**

THE MAGIC FLUTE – Mozart | Conductors **Johanna Malangré** | **Chad Kelly** | **Sam Weller** | Director **Sir Thomas Allen** with Translation by **Kit Hesketh-Harvey**

Australian Premiere The Scottish Opera's ingenious production of Mozart's famous final opera *The Magic Flute*, arrives premieres in Sydney with a strong Australian cast including sopranos Alexandra Flood and Gemma Nha, tenors Alasdair Kent and Nicholas Jones and international singers Daniela Cappiello and Tetiana Zhuravel making their OA debuts. This production by baritone-turned director Sir Thomas Allen, a legend of the operatic stage renowned for his Papageno, gives Mozart's enchanting fairytale a steampunk twist that has earned five-star reviews across the UK. Sung in German with English dialogue and full of whim, wit and wonder with fabulously fun costumes and sets, *The Magic Flute* will be a feast for the ears with some of Mozart's most iconic music including the Queen of the Night aria. **Sydney Opera House, 13 January – 23 March**

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE – Donizetti | Conductor **Danila Grassi** | Director **Simon Phillips**

This much-loved production of Donizetti's sparkling opera by Australian theatre royalty Simon Phillips makes a welcome return to Sydney. A love letter to high notes and high jinks, this opera promises romance, laughter and dazzling singing. Audiences are transported to outback Australia in 1915, with Michael Scott-Mitchell's set made entirely from corrugated iron (complete with corrugated mountains, sheep, power lines and chickens) and Gabriela Tylesova's gorgeous painterly costumes. Stacey Alleaume makes a triumphant return from the stages of Europe for her role debut as Adina, sharing the stage with local stars, John Longmiur, Simon Meadows and Leon Vitogiannis, along with Pietro Spagnoli and Eden Shifroni making their OA debuts. They'll be led by Danila Grassi, one of the world's most exciting young conductors in her OA debut. **Sydney Opera House, 29 January – 12 March**

LA VOIX HUMAINE & L'ENFANT ET LES SORTILÈGES | Conductor **Andrea Battistoni** | Director **Claudia Osborne**

This double bill of two one-act French masterpieces will be performed in concert with the full force of the Opera Australia Orchestra under the baton of Andrea Battistoni. Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* is an electrifying one-woman opera where an unnamed woman makes one final phone call with her lover, whose attentions have turned elsewhere. Opera superstar Anna Caterina Antonacci makes a long-awaited OA debut with an acclaimed, unforgettable performance, unleashing extraordinary vocal and dramatic intensity. While *La Voix humaine* is intimate and raw, Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* is a dark fantasy set free, its kaleidoscopic score draws on influences from Wagner to Gershwin. During a ferocious tantrum, a child lays waste to their room — until the objects they've destroyed spring to life. Adored Australian turned international mezzo soprano Margaret Plummer leads a cast of outstanding Australian singers in this rarely performed opera by one of the early 20th century's most inventive composers. **Sydney Opera House, 5 February**

EUCALYPTUS – Mills | Composer **Sir Jonathan Mills** | Librettist **Meredith Oakes** | Conductor **Tahu Matheson** | Director **Michael Gow**

Sydney Premiere Following rave reviews around the country, this remarkable Australian opera by Sir Richard Mills and Meredith Oakes makes its highly anticipated Sydney premiere. Based on Murray Bail's beloved novel, *Eucalyptus* is a timeless story of love and longing that follows the relationship between Ellen Holland and her overprotective father who has kept her sheltered away from the world in his haven forest of eucalyptus, scared of losing her to her many male suitors. Renowned Australian playwright and director Michael Gow directs this deeply moving production, with designs by Simone Romaniuk. Soprano Desiree Frahn makes her OA debut as Ellen joined by Simon Meadows, Samuel Dundas and Michael Petrucelli. *Eucalyptus* is a co-production commissioned by Opera Australia and Victorian Opera. **Sydney Opera House, 22 – 25 March**

SYDNEY WINTER 2027

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE – Gilbert & Sullivan | Conductor **James Pratt** | Director **Stuart Maunder**

Gilbert and Sullivan's widely loved *The Pirates of Penzance* returns to the Sydney Opera House for the first time in nearly two decades. Directed by Gilbert & Sullivan aficionado, Stuart Maunder, this production foregrounds the operetta's comic precision and enduring musical appeal. Following Frederic, a young man torn between duty and love, the work follows his bid to leave a band of pirates and win Mabel, the Major General's daughter. The staging draws on the operetta's distinctive blend of satire and sentiment, with its rapid-fire wordplay and recognisable musical numbers underscoring a story that continues to resonate for its wit and theatricality. This production of *The Pirates of Penzance* is originally produced by Opera Australia and will be presented in association with Victorian Opera. **Sydney Opera House, 1 July – 7 August**

FAUST – Gounod | Conductor **Nikolas Nägele** | Director **Sir David McVicar**

This grand production of *Faust* by one of opera's greatest living directors, Sir David McVicar returns to the Sydney Opera House in July. Set in the decadence and debauchery of 1870s Paris where cathedral columns tower behind a crumbling proscenium arch for Faust's terrible pact to play out in all its sinister splendour. Charles Edwards' recreations of historic Parisian landmarks, combined with Brigitte Reiffenstuel's lavish costumes, place Gounod's music including the famous Soldier's Chorus, the rousing 'Le veau d'or' and Marguerite's beautiful Jewel Song within a richly detailed world of grandeur and moral decline. International singers Rafał Siwek and Stefan Pop, who is a critically acclaimed Faust, make their Australian debuts along with in-demand German conductor Nikolas Nägele, while Mildura-born soprano Siobhan Stagg, returns home from Europe to perform as Marguerite. Performed in French, this gothic production delivers opera at its very best with a hefty dose of theatricality. **This production of Faust is a co-production with Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Opera Monte Carlo, Opera de Lille and Fondazione Teatro Lirico Giuseppe Verdi, Trieste and has been licenced by the Opera Conference. Sydney Opera House, 10 July – 4 August**

A MASKED BALL – Verdi | Conductor **Alevtina Ioffe** | Director **Daniele Menghini**

Sydney Premiere Direct from the Verdi Festival in Parma, this new staging of Verdi's *The Masked Ball* by Daniele Menghini premieres at the Sydney Opera House. In this co production by the Teatro Comunale di Bologna, and the Teatro Regio de Parma, with Fondazione Rete Lirica delle Marche Menghini creates a world of sinister beauty with costumes offering a nod to Renaissance Europe. Performed in Italian, the opera draws on a real-life assassination and focuses on Riccardo, a powerful ruler whose pursuit of a forbidden love sets in motion a chain of betrayal and revenge. Homegrown superstar Nicole Car brings her acclaimed performance of Amelia to Australian audiences for the first time, alongside renowned tenor Diego Torre as Riccardo and baritone Daniel Luis de Vicente, making his Australian debut as Renato. Conductor Alevtina Ioffe leads the production, which highlights Verdi's characteristic blend of political tension, emotional intensity and lush orchestration. **Sydney Opera House, 23 July – 7 August**

MELBOURNE AUTUMN 2027

TURANDOT - Puccini | Conductors **Andrea Battistoni** | **Tahu Matheson** | Director & Choreographer **Ann Yee**

Melbourne Premiere For the first time in Melbourne, a contemporary and dramatic new production in partnership with the Opera Conference of Puccini's fabled opera, *Turandot*, by international award-winning director and choreographer Ann Yee will be an exhilarating start to OA's first opera season back in Arts Centre Melbourne. With monumental sets, immersive visuals, mesmerising dance and Puccini's atmospheric score that includes the most universally adored aria in the opera canon, the electrifying 'Nessun dorma', this is a captivating piece of theatre. Melbourne's own international star soprano, Anna-Louise Cole, brings her thrilling portrayal of the title role home for the first time, alongside the magnificent Diego Torre and Samantha Clarke as Calaf and Liu respectively, with Andrea Battistoni and Tahu Matheson conducting. **Arts Centre Melbourne, 5 – 27 May**

THE MAGIC FLUTE - Mozart | Conductor **Sam Weller** | Director **Sir Thomas Allen** with Translation by **Kit Hesketh-Harvey**

Melbourne Premiere The Scottish Opera's ingenious production of Mozart's famous final opera *The Magic Flute*, arrives premieres in Melbourne with a strong Australian cast including soprano Gemma Nha, mezzo Emily Edmonds and tenor Filipe Manu. This production by baritone-turned director Sir Thomas Allen, a legend of the operatic stage renowned for his Papageno, gives Mozart's enchanting fairytale a steampunk twist that has earned five-star reviews across the UK. Sung in German with English dialogue and full of whim, wit and wonder with fabulously fun costumes and sets, *The Magic Flute* will be a feast for the ears with some of Mozart's most iconic music including the Queen of the Night aria. **Arts Centre Melbourne, 13 – 28 May**

THE DROVER'S WIFE - Palmer | Conductor **Tahu Matheson** | Director & Librettist **Leah Purcell**
AM: Composer and Co Librettist: George Palmer AM

Melbourne Premiere Australia's newest opera star and proud Koa, Kuku Yalanji, Wakka Wakka woman, Nina Korbe, will stun when she reprises her role as Molly Johnson alongside First Nations tenor Marcus Corowa as Yadaka in this monumental new Australian opera *The Drover's Wife*. With an entrancing score by George Palmer, this operatic adaptation of a quintessential Australian story reveals the symphonic soul of Purcell's modern classic, weaving grand opera traditions with contemporary First Nations storytelling. Co-commissioned and co-produced with Queensland Performing Arts Centre and Oombarra Productions, and based on Leah Purcell's play, novel and film, *The Drover's Wife* comes to Melbourne following acclaimed seasons in Brisbane and Sydney. **Arts Centre Melbourne, 21 - 29 May**

MELBOURNE SPRING 2027

TANNHÄUSER – Wagner | Conductor **Andrea Battistoni** | Director **Sir David McVicar**

World Premiere Production This is the Wagner event of the year: the world premiere of a new production of *Tannhäuser* by Sir David McVicar, exclusive to Melbourne and the first new production for Opera Australia in almost 30 years. One of the most talked-about directors this century (his previous works for OA include *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Faust* and *Così fan tutte*) McVicar will bring his incisive, provocative style to Wagner's epic story of lust, redemption and what it means to be good.

OA Music Director Andrea Battistoni will conduct, leading a remarkable cast including tenor Sergei Skorokhodov, in his OA mainstage opera debut in the title role. The production brings home Melbourne-born Joshua Bloom to sing the role of Landgraf Hermann and introduces some of the world's finest opera talent to Australian audiences, Georgian mezzo-soprano Nino Surguladze as Venus and rising Russian baritone Maxim Lisiin as Wolfram von Eschenbach.

Arts Centre Melbourne, 5 – 14 November

BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO.9 | Conductor **Andrea Battistoni**

Voted by Australians as the greatest piece of classical music of all time in the ABC Classic 100, *Beethoven Symphony No. 9* will be performed at full scale by the internationally acclaimed Opera Australia Chorus and superb Orchestra Victoria, in the grand setting of the Ian Potter State Theatre, under the baton of Opera Australia Music Director Andrea Battistoni.

From its mysterious opening to the electrifying, famous Ode to Joy finale, Beethoven's ninth symphony is one of the most extraordinary achievements in music. Written as Beethoven's hearing faded, the symphony reaches beyond the orchestra and embraces the human voice, it was at the time, a radical reimagining of what a symphony could be. **Arts Centre Melbourne, 13 November**

TOURING 2027

DON GIOVANNI – Mozart | Director Michael Gow

For over 30 years, Opera Australia's National Tour, in partnership with the Opera Conference, has brought extraordinary operatic experiences to far corners of the country. In 2027 Michael Gow's production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* will be performed at a wide selection of venues from art centres to community halls across New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the ACT. The production will revitalise one of Mozart's most fascinating characters as he grapples with the reality of his debauched days coming to a sudden and mortal end.

DESANDRE & DUNFORD

This intimate recital in partnership with MusicaViva, will be a rare opportunity to hear "the duo with the most chemistry in classical music" (Opera Wire), taking the world by storm, Lea Desandre and Thomas Dunford, partners in life and music. Mezzo-soprano Lea, named "Opera Singer of the Year" at the Opus Klassik awards, is one of the brightest talents of her generation, appearing on stages from Paris to Los Angeles, Salzburg to New York while lutenist Thomas is the inspiring founder and artistic director of Ensemble Jupiter. For this exciting Australian debut, Lea will explore an exquisite bouquet of songs from the Baroque to now, exploring the many shades of love, from tenderness to passion to heartbreak, all with Thomas at her side bringing his sunny harmonies and captivating lute solos.

Melbourne Recital Centre, 12 October
City Recital Hall, Sydney, 18 October

Booking Information

Subscriptions available now. Prices start at \$142 for two operas.

Opera Australia Box Office

Melbourne 03 9685 3700

Sydney 02 9318 8200

Single tickets on sale from 29 September 2026

www.opera.org.au

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