

**MEDIA RELEASE**

11 January 2021

**Verdi** | Directed by Sven-Eric Bechtolf | Conducted by Renato Palumbo**Verdi's rarely performed *Ernani* to premiere at the Sydney Opera House this February****February 2-13, 2021** | Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House**Starring** | Diego Torre | Natalie Aroyan | Vladimir Stoyanov | Vitalij Kowaljow

Opera Australia will present the Australian premiere of Sven-Eric Bechtolf's production of Verdi's rarely performed opera, *Ernani*, playing at the Sydney Opera House for the first time this February and featuring an extraordinary cast that includes two of the country's finest singers, Diego Torre and Natalie Aroyan.

This seldom performed work requires an extremely talented cast to tackle the difficult score. Both Torre and Aroyan will make their role debuts as Ernani and Elvira respectively, alongside internationally renowned powerhouse singers; baritone Vladimir Stoyanov as Don Carlo, King of Spain, and bass Vitalij Kowaljow as Don Ruy Gomez de Silva.

OA's Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini is particularly thrilled to be bringing *Ernani* to Australia.

"It's the second co-production we've done with Teatro alla Scala after the tremendous success of *Attila* in Sydney last year. We've managed to secure some of the world's best singers."

"It was the most popular of Verdi's early works so it's way overdue for its Opera House premiere."

Verdi specialist, conductor Renato Palumbo, will lead the Opera Australia Orchestra and Chorus in their performance of this rousing score. With passionate choruses, emotional arias and flawless ensemble writing, this opera will have the audience in raptures from the opening notes.

In this production, German director Sven-Eric Bechtolf embraces the melodrama of the story. The commanding staging, combined with grand sets and lavish period costumes, including masks and headdresses, create the perfect setting for this epic opera to unfold.

Part of Verdi's early repertoire and based on the play titled *Hernani* by Victor Hugo, *Ernani* tells the story of a former Don-turned-outlaw whose desire to be with the woman he loves is outweighed only by his duty to honour a vow he once made. Like all good medieval tales, this opera has intrigue, disguise, betrayal and adventure.

**Creatives**

Conductor **Renato Palumbo**  
 Director **Sven-Eric Bechtolf**  
 Revival Director **Laura Galmarini**  
 Scenic Designer **Julian Crouch**  
 Costume Designer **Kevin Pollard**  
 Lighting Designer **Marco Filibeck**  
 Video Designer **Filippo Marta**  
 Assistant Director **Priscilla Jackman**

**Cast**

Ernani **Diego Torre**  
 Don Carlo, King of Spain **Vladimir Stoyanov**  
 Don Ruy Gomez De Silva **Vitalij Kowaljow**  
 Elvira **Natalie Aroyan**  
 Giovanna **Jennifer Black**  
 Don Riccardo **Simon Kim**  
 Jago **Luke Gabbedy**

**Opera Australia Chorus**  
**Opera Australia Orchestra**

Opera Australia is committed to COVID Safe practices.  
 Please refer to the website for the Company's COVID Safe procedures:  
<https://opera.org.au/covid-safety>

**Media enquiries**

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**Performance information**

**Evenings at 7.30pm**  
 February 2, 4, 6, 8, 10  
**Saturday Matinee at 12.30pm**  
 February 13

**Running time**

Approximately 2 hours and 25 minutes including one interval

Performed in Italian with English surtitles

Proudly supported by  
 The Artistic Director's Circle

Co-production by Teatro alla Scala and  
 Opera Australia

**Bookings**

Adult tickets from \$79 (fees may apply)

Opera Australia Box Office  
 (02) 9318 8200  
[www.opera.org.au/](http://www.opera.org.au/)

**Joan Sutherland Theatre,  
 Sydney Opera House**