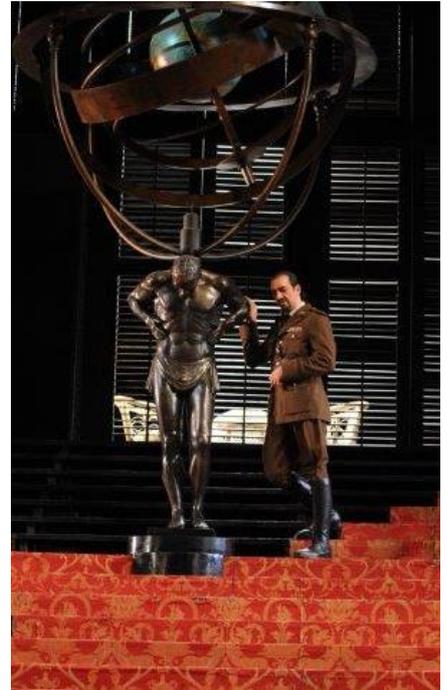


**MEDIA RELEASE**

31 March 2021

**Opera Australia’s winter season to include a stunning new production and a trio of Verdi blockbusters**



**Verdi Attila | Aida | Otello | Offenbach The Tales of Hoffmann**

Opera Australia will take another positive step forward in its COVID recovery when it presents the premiere of a stunning new production, by celebrated director Damiano Michieletto, of Offenbach’s *The Tales of Hoffmann*, starring internationally renowned Australian soprano Jessica Pratt.

Following in the great Dame Joan Sutherland’s footsteps, Jessica is one of the few sopranos in the world today to play all four of the demanding roles in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, in what will be a multiple role debut for the Company, and an operatic event not to be missed.

*The Tales of Hoffmann* is also the first co-production with the Royal Opera House that Opera Australia will build and create in its Surry Hills workshop, and perform the premiere season.

Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini is particularly excited at the prospect of producing and presenting this production of *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

“I’m thrilled we’ve been able to secure this deal to build and present the premiere of Michieletto’s *Hoffmann*. It’s another fantastic opportunity for OA’s creative teams, builders, designers and artisans to work with such a celebrated director, and to be the first in the world to present this brand new production in 2021.”

The Sydney Winter Season will also see the triumphant return of Verdi’s *Attila*, the critically acclaimed La Scala co-production, which was dramatically cut short in March 2020 by the coronavirus, after only two performances. Stars Natalie Aroyan and Diego Torre will reprise their roles of Odabella and Foresto respectively, and introducing Russian bass Alexander Vinogradov in the lead role of Attila.

The Company’s first fully digital production of *Aida* by Davide Livermore will make a return, along with a revival of Harry Kupfer’s production of *Otello*, that will star internationally acclaimed Korean tenor, Yonghoon Lee.

**VERDI: *Aida* | Conductor Lorenzo Passerini and Tahu Matheson | Director & Choreographer Davide Livermore**

Sydney's winter season opens with the revival of Davide Livermore's acclaimed digital production of *Aida*. Known as the big piece in any repertoire, this production is no exception. Director and choreographer Davide Livermore uses stunning digital technologies that takes the audience experience to a whole new level. Ten digital LED screens are choreographed to create bold scenes evoking the power of ancient Egypt in a production celebrated as "truly thrilling" by the Daily Telegraph when it premiered in 2018.

Stunning American soprano Leah Crocetto will lead an all-star cast that includes such luminaries as Elena Gabouri, reprising her role as Amneris, along with Stefano La Colla and Najmiddin Mavlyanov both debuting for OA, sharing the role of Radamès, while Warwick Fyfe and Michael Honeyman play Amonasro and Daniel Sumegi and David Parkin play Ramfis.

**Joan Sutherland Theatre 22 June – 13 August**

**VERDI: *Attila* | Conductor Renato Palumbo | Director Davide Livermore**

A co-production with Teatro alla Scala, visionary director Davide Livermore's production of *Attila* received great acclaim following its Australian premiere in the Sydney Summer Season last year, when it closed after only two performances because of the coronavirus outbreak. Livermore fuses video projections with colossal set pieces to create an awe-inspiring world, adding two real horses on stage for grandeur. This production features a world-class cast including Alexander Vinogradov, making his Sydney Opera House debut as Attila, Natalie Aroyan reprising her role as Odabella, Diego Torre as Foresto and Marco Vratogna as Ezio, all under the baton of Italian Maestro Renato Palumbo.

**Joan Sutherland Theatre, 29 June – 10 July**

**VERDI: *Otello* | Conductor Andrea Battistoni | Director Harry Kupfer**

Often referred to as Verdi's greatest opera, *Otello* returns to the Joan Sutherland stage with celebrated Korean tenor Yonghoon Lee leading a stellar cast, in a revival of German Director Harry Kupfer's highly acclaimed production.

Described as 'taking the best bits' of one of Shakespeare's most famous works and creating a taut, vivid romantic tragedy, *Otello* premiered at La Scala in 1887 to rapturous acclaim, with Verdi reportedly taking 20 curtain calls. Deemed a resounding success, to this day it is revered for having three of the most demanding roles, both vocally and dramatically, in Verdi's repertoire – Otello, Iago and Desdemona. Yonghoon Lee, known as a remarkable singer-actor, debuts in the role of Otello, alongside the incomparable Karah Son making her long awaited debut as Desdemona. Marco Vratogna continues his run of villainous roles, with a chilling portrayal of Iago. Young conducting sensation Andrea Battistoni conducts. **Joan Sutherland Theatre 16 July – 29 July**

**OFFENBACH: *The Tales of Hoffmann* | Conductor Carlo Montanaro | Director Damiano Michieletto**

Offenbach's greatest and last work (the composer died four months before its premiere), is known for its intoxicating mix of emotion and dazzling music, including the famous, fiendishly difficult 'Doll Song'.

This stunning new production by celebrated director Damiano Michieletto, with its elaborate sets depicting Hoffmann's three worlds, will be designed and built by OA's team in Sydney as a co-production with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Homegrown superstar soprano Jessica Pratt returns to Australia to play all four leading roles Olympia, Antonia, Giulietta and Stella, a rare achievement, with only a handful of other singers in the world today capable of the feat. Belgian tenor Jean François-Barros sings the title character and Croatian bass-baritone Marko Mimica sings the four villains. **Joan Sutherland Theatre 2 – 14 August**

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