

MEDIA RELEASE

14 April 2021

Verdi | Directed by Sven-Eric Bechtolf | Conducted by Francesco Lanzillotta**Grand opera graces the State Theatre stage with the Melbourne premiere of Verdi's *Ernani*****13-22 May 2021 | State Theatre, Arts Centre Melbourne****Starring | Diego Torre | Natalie Aroyan | Vladimir Stoyanov | Alexander Vinogradov**

Opera Australia will present the Melbourne premiere of its epic co-production, with Milan's famous Teatro alla Scala, of Verdi's rarely performed opera, *Ernani*, at the Arts Centre Melbourne this May with two of the country's finest singers, Diego Torre and Natalie Aroyan, leading an extraordinary cast.

This seldom performed work requires an extremely talented cast to tackle the difficult score. Torre and Aroyan will play Ernani and Elvira respectively, along with internationally renowned powerhouse singer baritone Vladimir Stoyanov as Don Carlo, King of Spain. Internationally celebrated bass Alexander Vinogradov joins the cast as Don Ruy Gomez de Silva.

OA's Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini chose to program two big Verdi masterpieces for the Company's return to the State Theatre.

"We're delivering what OA does best; opera on a grand -scale with a huge cast and orchestra, big voices and big sets. I'm sure the Melbourne audiences are really going to appreciate these productions.

"I'm particularly proud to be bringing *Ernani* to Melbourne, it's the second co-production we've done with La Scala, which has allowed us to present such a rarely performed work."

Conductor Carlo Montanaro, will lead the Opera Australia Chorus and Orchestra Victoria 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 wholeheartedly embraces the melodrama of the story and creates a 'play within a play'.

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 **Carlo Montanaro**
 Director **Sven-Eric Bechtolf**
 Rehearsal Director **Liesel Badorrek**
 Scenic Designer **Julian Crouch**
 Costume Designer **Kevin Pollard**
 Lighting Designer **Marco Filibeck**
 Video Designer **Filippo Marta**

Cast

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

Opera Australia Chorus
Orchestra Victoria

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>

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Performance information

Evenings at 7.30pm
 May 13, 15, 18
Saturday Matinee at 12.30pm
 May 22

Running time

Approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes including one interval

Performed in Italian with English surtitles

Co-production by Teatro alla Scala and Opera Australia

Bookings

Adult tickets from \$79 (fees may apply)

Opera Australia Box Office
 (03) 9685 3700
www.opera.org.au/

State Theatre, Arts Centre Melbourne

Production Partner HSBC

