

**MEDIA RELEASE**

20 April 2021

PACKER FAMILY  
FOUNDATION

## Opera Australia offers free arts access and training to students and teachers in Victoria

With the support of the Packer Family Foundation and the Crown Resorts Foundation, Opera Australia is launching an arts education initiative in Melbourne for local students and teachers that will coincide with its upcoming Autumn Season that opens at the Arts Centre Melbourne next month.

The aim of the initiative is to increase access to music, culture and vocational skills for students who may be geographically or financially challenged.

“It is absolutely our pleasure to offer exceptional music, storytelling and vocational activities to primary and secondary students across Melbourne,” said Opera Australia Artistic Director, Lyndon Terracini.

“The future of our industry relies on our young talent gaining access to resources like these so they can explore the arts as a potential career and, should they wish to, start expanding their skills and experience.”

The multi-year initiative offers resources for knowledge and training to Victorian-based secondary and primary schools at no cost.

### Behind the Scenes Program

Senior secondary school students are invited to experience the magic of live opera from both sides of the curtain.

Schools can register their interest to attend a final dress rehearsal of the upcoming production of *Aida* at the Arts Centre Melbourne. Using OA’s ground-breaking technology, this digital version of Verdi’s masterpiece provides a fully immersive theatrical experience that will be a spectacular sight for students to behold.

For those with a vocational interest in what happens backstage, schools can book in a tour for students to see the behind the scenes working of opera, including costumes, wigs, various crew roles, walking onstage and a Q&A session.

### Singing and Storytelling Workshop

Primary school teachers are invited to attend a workshop at the Melbourne Opera Centre to learn how to engage students in storytelling activities and build musical skills and drama techniques.

Supported by a digital resource kit, teachers will explore various opera music to compile a repertoire of songs from well-known children’s choruses, then challenge students to create characters and work together as an ensemble to sing and perform.

This new initiative is designed specifically to guide teachers in their instruction of singing and storytelling skills for primary school aged children.

Students’ participation in the program will foster teamwork, listening and communication skills, resilience, creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills. By the end of the program, which can take only a few weeks, students will have devised, rehearsed and performed in their own versions of the story, and had a lot of fun along the way!

### Important Dates:

#### Behind the Scenes Program

- **April 29:** Registration due for secondary school students to attend a dress rehearsal
- **May 4:** Dress rehearsal viewing for registered secondary school students
- **May 20:** Backstage tour for registered secondary school students

#### Singing and Storytelling Workshop

- **July 13:** Registration due for primary schools teacher workshop
- **July 20:** Teacher workshop for registered primary schools teachers

To register please contact Retha Howard at [retha.howard@opera.org.au](mailto:retha.howard@opera.org.au)

**Limited places are available.** Applicants are encouraged to register ASAP as places will be allocated on a first in, best dressed basis.

For further information about Opera Australia’s education initiatives, see: <https://opera.org.au/support-us/education-and-outreach/>

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