

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## Brisbane Ring Cycle falls victim to COVID-19



Opera Australia, today announced it has been forced to postpone the Brisbane premiere of the world's first fully digital Ring Cycle for the second year running due to the latest COVID-19 outbreak.

After originally being programmed for 2020, the production dubbed the 'Everest of opera' was re-scheduled to open at Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) on 29 October this year.

However with a hard border closure now in place, to protect the State from the current crisis that has taken hold in NSW and VIC, the performers and crew, as well as 80% of total ticket holders, will be unable to travel to Queensland for the production.

Acknowledging how difficult the current circumstances are for everyone involved, Opera Australia Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini AM believes the postponement was the only viable option.

"As desperately disappointing as this news is, we understand that the safety and well-being of not only our performing Company, but the entire community is the absolute number one priority.

"I really want to thank the tireless efforts and enduring patience of everyone at Opera Australia but also our key partners in this project, Leanne Coddington and her team at Tourism and Events Queensland and John Kotzas from QPAC. As well as acknowledge the ongoing support from Brisbane Economic Development Agency. They've all worked so incredibly hard, exhausting every single option possible to try to get this amazing production to the stage.

"And to all the artists who have been working so hard for many, many months preparing for this massive undertaking for Brisbane – this past year of uncertainty has had a terrible emotional and financial impact on them and I want to thank them for their strength, talent and resilience," he said.

Opera Australia has committed to re-scheduling the Brisbane season and again working closely with the wonderfully talented team at Queensland Symphony Orchestra on both the Ring Cycle, and the co-production of *Aida* with Opera Queensland, ensuring that the seven years of planning that has already gone into this project, will not go to waste.

QPAC Chief Executive John Kotzas said the postponement of the eagerly-awaited Brisbane season of The Ring Cycle and *Aida* was a blow to both the arts and tourism industries, for the second year in a row.

“This epic opera season was certainly one of Australia’s most anticipated and significant cultural events of the year and to see it postponed again is just heart-breaking for all those behind the scenes as well as our patrons who’ve been waiting years to see this season,” Mr Kotzas said.

“It was to bring together our country’s premiere voices and orchestral talent with international cast and creatives, the culmination of our partnership with OQ, QSO, QCGU and OA.

“This kind of large-scale season is a wonderful tourism drawcard, attracting interstate and international visitors, as well as Queensland opera buffs and we all know that kind of travel is just not possible at the moment due to COVID.

“Although we’re devastated this year’s season cannot go ahead we remain determined to work with all our partners to bring The Ring Cycle and *Aida* to our QPAC stage, so we encourage all our patrons to hold on to their tickets while we work towards a new date.”

Opera Australia also acknowledged how disappointing this news will be for audiences, and in particular extended their thanks to those who helped make the project possible with their generous support of the Ring Syndicate.

Opera Australia is asking ticket holders for the Ring Cycle and *Aida* for their understanding and patience during these trying times for the Company, they will all be contacted in due course.

Negotiations are currently underway to secure new dates, at a time when lockdowns, quarantining and border closures will be a thing of the past.

Known simply as the Ring, Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is recognised internationally as a masterpiece and the pinnacle in operatic staging that attracts devotees from around the world, who immerse themselves in 15-hours of extraordinary musical and vocal performances over four glorious nights.

This production, by visionary Chinese director Chen Shi-Zheng, was to be the first large scale performance of the full Ring Cycle to be held in Queensland and also the first fully digital version ever staged. The sets will incorporate huge, LED screens suspended from the ceiling and choreographed to move seamlessly around the stage, creating a striking visual landscape.

The Ring Cycle Brisbane is supported by the Queensland Government via Tourism and Events Queensland and Brisbane City Council via Brisbane Economic Development Agency.

Opera Australia, in association with Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, Opera Queensland, Travel Associates and Queensland Symphony Orchestra, presents the Ring Cycle Brisbane, Queensland, which features on the *It’s Live! in Queensland* events calendar.

Ends

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

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