

MEDIA RELEASE

12 May 2022

Legendary bass Ferruccio Furlanetto in two Australian performance premieres



Internationally celebrated opera stars, the legendary Italian bass Ferruccio Furlanetto, and American soprano Leah Crocetto, will both perform in concert for Opera Australia, rounding out a star studded Melbourne season later this month.

First up is the Australian premiere of Arrigo Boito's only opera *Mefistofele* in Concert where Furlanetto will lead an outstanding cast of soloists, along with the full Opera Australia Chorus and Children's Chorus on the State Theatre stage, and Orchestra Victoria in the pit.

Renowned for his vast range, thundering vocal power and masterful acting, Furlanetto has sung with opera's greatest icons, including Luciano Pavarotti, José Carreras, Mirella Freni and Dame Joan Sutherland.

Leah Crocetto is also making a welcome return to Melbourne, following her magnificent 2021 Australian debut in *Aida*, and is set to give a moving portrayal of Margherita. Furlanetto will play the devil, Mefistofele, and will be joined on stage by superb tenor Diego Torre as Faust with powerhouse Australian soprano Natalie Aroyan singing the role of Elena. Leading Australian singers Sian Sharp and Iain Henderson complete the cast, all to be conducted by audience favourite Andrea Battistoni.

The rarely performed *Mefistofele* is a distinctive, lush work, full of stunning choral pieces and magnificent orchestration. It is the only complete opera by Arrigo Boito who was a librettist for Verdi and a brilliant composer. This will be the first time the opera has ever been performed in Australia.

Furlanetto will follow up this performance with solo concert *Ferruccio Furlanetto in Concert* where he revisits key moments from his long and illustrious career, on 1 June at Melbourne Recital Hall in another Australian premiere exclusive to Melbourne audiences.

One of the greatest living voices, Furlanetto describes this concert as an "itinerary" of his life in music, and will include Brahms, Mussorgsky and Rachmaninov as well as beloved bass arias from *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Boris Godunov* and *Don Carlo*.

PATRON-IN-CHIEF
DR HARUHISA HANDA

HERO PARTNERS



GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Mefistofele in Concert | State Theatre, Arts Centre Melbourne | 25 & 27 May

Creatives

Conductor **Andrea Battistoni**

Cast

Margherita **Leah Crocetto**

Faust **Diego Torre**

Mefistofele **Ferruccio Furlanetto**

Elena **Natalie Aroyan**

Marta / Pantalis **Sian Sharp**

Wagner / Nereo **Iain Henderson**

Opera Australia Chorus

Opera Australia Children's 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>

Performance information

Evenings at 7.00pm

May 25, 27

Running time

Approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes including one interval

Performed in Italian with English surtitles

Bookings

Adult tickets from \$59 (fees may apply)

Opera Australia Box Office
(02) 9318 8200

www.opera.org.au

**State Theatre,
Arts Centre Melbourne**

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Ferruccio Furlanetto in Concert | Melbourne Recital Centre | 1 June

Cast

Ferruccio Furlanetto

Associate Artist

Natalia Sidorenko

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Performance information

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Running time

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Bookings

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Melbourne Recital Centre

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