

## CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Over 60 years, Opera Australia has grown to become Australia's largest and busiest arts company. It is now comparable to the great opera companies of Europe and North America. This is no mean feat with Australia's small population and huge landmass.

Our Sydney audiences and the power of this great city to attract visitors share the credit and reap the benefits of this success, as we perform in Sydney for nine months of the year. Last year, we sold more than 600,000 tickets to people from 120 countries, enabling us to provide work for thousands of artists, including singers, instrumentalists, dancers, tailors, wig-makers, writers, actors, painters, photographers, conductors, designers and more.

To celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, and in tribute to one of the world's greatest buildings, we are thrilled to present *Sydney Opera House – The Opera (The Eighth Wonder)* by Alan John and Dennis Watkins, on the Sydney Opera House forecourt. With Utzon's iconic white sails as the background, this will be an historic event.

In early 2015 we premièred Kate Miller-Heidke's *The Rabbits* at the Perth International Arts Festival before a season at the Melbourne Festival. Now Sydneysiders can experience this beautiful, family-friendly production as part of the Sydney Festival in January.

In the 2016 Sydney Opera House season, we present a glamorous co-production with Opéra de Lausanne of Verdi's *Luisa Miller*, Sir David McVicar's new production of *Così fan tutte*, and a re-staging of *Simon Boccanegra*.

I am very much looking forward to seeing the renowned Chinese film and opera director Chen Shi-Zheng direct Puccini's *Turandot* on the Sydney Harbour stage, and to see Dame Julie Andrews direct *My Fair Lady*, also celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, after the 1956 première in which Julie Andrews created the role of Elisa Doolittle.

In 2016 we see Australian singers take on new roles, such as Nicole Car in *Luisa Miller* and Anna Dowsley in *The Barber of Seville*, Yonghoon Lee as Don José and Barbara Frittoli, George Petean and Giacomo Prestia in *Simon Boccanegra*.

I'd like to wish a very happy 60<sup>th</sup> birthday to Opera Australia and, in particular, to the subscribers who have supported us for so many years. You can be very proud of your national opera company.