Victorian Opera

STEPHEN SONDHEIM & JAMES LAPINE

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

A MASTERPIECE COMES TO LIFE

20 - 27 July 2013

This season is dedicated to Wolfe Gosheven Rodwell-Aulich, the son of Tirion Rodwell and her husband Dan Aulich.

Tirion works in our Costume department creating magic from piles of multi-coloured material and transforming designers' sketches into the beautiful costumes you will see on stage. Her husband is a highly skilled Video Technician/Project Manager for the music industry - and their life is full of wonderful art.

Wolfe was born with a heart condition which kept him in The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. Every day for three months Tirion and Dan sang to him and made him smile. Their strength was an inspiration to everyone who works at Victorian Opera as well as their friends and family.

One of the arias you will experience in *Sunday in the Park with George* - 'Children and Art' - explores our two greatest legacies, children and art.

This reason - together with the costumes Tirion has created on her return to Victorian Opera - is why our season is dedicated to Wolfe.

Wolfe Gosheven Rodwell-Aulich
7/11/2012 – 13/02/2013

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

RICHARD MILLS

'... a piece which has a special place in the consciousness of a company which has a singular interest in the creation of new work, development of young people and in being different.'

Richard Mills

In the 1880's Georges Seurat created a masterpiece with a highly individual vision and technique – a painting which froze a moment in time, a moment in the lives of the subjects on that idyllic Sunday in Paris. Seurat died alone, he never sold a single painting, but held fast to his inner conviction as an artist despite the changing vicissitudes of his brief life.

In the 1980's, a young American artist named George – great grandson of Georges Seurat, is spiritually lost despite his success. He searches for meaning in his quest to make art. Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, in this great work, explore the nature of artistic creation, affirming the transcendence of art over the hostilities of time. The mysteries and difficulties of "the act of making art" becomes the inspiration for this great work of musical theatre, which celebrates the power of the creative act over the flux of time and circumstance.

Both acts mimic the process of pictorial composition in their large dramatic rhythms; assembling characters, situations, a geography of emotions in simultaneous spatial and musical perspectives that are the result of the sure and masterful control of theatrical process that are the hallmarks of this masterpiece.

Therefore, to succeed, this work requires above all, a deep sense of commitment to the notion of ensemble from all concerned – a notion that is also at the heart of the company spirit of Victorian Opera. This cast and creative team have embraced this idea from the first day of rehearsal, generating a wonderful energy in the rehearsal room which I am sure will achieve a similar energy in the theatre.

Yet all in this journey are also part of a larger work in progress; beginning on day one and ending on the final curtain of the last show – in words from the text – "Pretty isn't beautiful, Mother. Pretty is what changes. What the eye arranges...is what is beautiful."

"Children and art" are what we bequeath to the future. Most importantly, ***Sunday in the Park with George*** is a piece which celebrates the wonder of making art – both collectively and individually – and therefore a piece which has a special place in the consciousness of a company which has a singular interest in the creation of new work, development of young people and in being different.

"Anything you do, let it come to you…then it will be new" – these words are more for us than a quote from the production, they provide all of us at Victorian Opera with a certain inspiration for the future.

"A blank page of canvas…so many possibilities."

Enjoy the show and join us for the future.

Richard Mills
Artistic Director

LUCY SHORROCKS

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

'... one of Sondheim's most prominent contributions to the canon of American musical theatre.'

Lucy Shorrocks

Three years ago, I found myself in a rehearsal room watching a group of performers from opera and music theatre paint a wickedly compelling picture of a decadent city. After the rehearsal, one of the opera singers quietly revealed that despite their initial concerns, watching their music theatre counterparts prepare and rehearse had transformed their own dramatic approach. The collaboration, *The Threepenny Opera,* went on to become a runaway success but more importantly it had created its own life-changing magic, which is something we have always aspired to do.

It was inevitable after the success of *The Threepenny Opera* that Victorian Opera would once again seek out a production to rediscover the magic created when music theatre and opera performers come together. For us, that was ***Sunday in the Park with George***, one of Sondheim's most prominent contributions to the canon of American musical theatre.

Musicals have long been performed by opera companies around the world as a way of exploring different repertoire and connecting with new audiences. For Victorian Opera, we simply couldn't ignore a work that reflects both the strengths of the company and its performers especially when the production of music theatre has been part of our company's constitution from the very beginning.

It seems fitting in our pursuit of the new, that we bring to life a musical inspired by an individual with his own pursuit of the new, Georges Seurat, the father of Pointillism and the creator of the impressionist masterpiece, *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*. What better way to herald our return to musical theatre than with a brand new Australian production and a unique and beautiful interpretation of a work that will remain close to the heart of any Sondheim fan.

Lucy Shorrocks
Managing Director

PHOEBE BRIGGS

CONDUCTOR'S MESSAGE

'... soundscape of soaring melodies, shimmering colours, fragile fragments and extraordinarily witty and moving lyrics.'

Phoebe Briggs

When thinking of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's Pulitzer Prize winning musical ***Sunday in the Park with George***, it is hard not to think in terms of Impressionism – which may seem odd as the work was written in 1984, a century after the Impressionist era (1875-1925)! However, as the musical is inspired by the famous painting *A Sunday on La Grand Jatte* by preeminent French Impressionist Georges Seurat, it's appropriate that there are strong links between the content of the score and libretto and the Impressionist style of painting, in particular Pointillism.

Impressionism as a movement in art has been described in various ways but all seem to come back to the idea of a focus on colour and light. What we see at the beginning of ***Sunday in the Park with George*** is a blank white canvas onto which the characters are gradually introduced. Sondheim 'frames' his work with this image as the musical finishes in the same way, with the audience left with "White. A blank page or canvas. His favourite. So many possibilities."

Sondheim's soundscape of soaring melodies, shimmering colours, fragile fragments and extraordinarily witty and moving lyrics creates the "design, composition, balance, light and harmony" of Seurat's painting. He uses 'colours' or leitmotifs in his music to introduce each character. A perfect example of this is the musical accompaniment - as well as the vocal line for George – the first time we see him painting in his studio. The song itself is called "Color and Light". It features a repeated staccato quaver figure which starts on the piano then is added to strings, woodwind and finally in George's vocal line itself ("Red red red red red orange…."). There is one syllable or word per note, giving the impression of George's rapid movement and 'dotty' pointillist style of painting. It's worth noting at this point that Seurat's technique of painting was in fact small, deliberate brushstrokes rather than dots.

The musical explores the imagined stories of the characters depicted in Seurat's painting, including the woman with the parasol in the foreground of the painting, who is cast as George's mistress and long-suffering muse; Dot. The choice of name would seem to be an obvious reference to Pointillism and a convenient link to the style of painting, however Sondheim has said it was merely a coincidence, and that Dot was a popular name in Paris at the time of the painting!

In researching for this production, I found a lovely article written by Michael Starobin, the orchestrator of ***Sunday in the Park with George***. He discusses a theory that his use of 11 musicians for this work reflected the 11 colours that Seurat uses in his painting. Starobin, however, clarified that this is a coincidence and merely what the Broadway show budget and pit size would allow!

It has been an absolute joy working with this cast and creative team on such a magnificent work.

Phoebe Briggs
Conductor

STUART MAUNDER

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

'We experience, in a very real way, the bliss of the creator, the intense concentration, the sheer hard work, the craft, the passion, the desire.'

Stuart Maunder

In the second half of the nineteenth century Georges Seurat pushed the boundaries and forced the Art Establishment to look at the world through new eyes. In ***Sunday in the Park with George***, Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine have created a work which asks audiences to look at the Broadway musical in a new way. Sondheim delights in breaking the rules. This is not a conventional musical in the Rodgers and Hammerstein sense. From the first moments we are in the hands, or rather the mind of the painter; trees disappear, dogs talk, scenes merge. Just as Seurat created dozens of miniature studies before tackling his monumental painting, so we experience these little snapshots of Parisian life. We meet various members of Parisian society with all their arguments, liaisons, insecurities and jealousies. We also experience George's tempestuous relationship with his love, his muse: the model, Dot. But ultimately all these ideas, issues and conflicts remain unresolved, all pale into insignificance, all exist just to provide inspiration for the creation of one of the greatest neo-impressionist paintings of all time, Seurat's masterpiece *A Sunday on La Grand Jatte*. All that counts is the work.

Although the relationship of George and Dot is at the heart of the piece, ***Sunday in the Park with George*** is not a conventional love story, indeed we have to wait four generations for the relationship built and destroyed in Act I to find some sort of resolution. What we have is rather the love affair with art, with the act of creation of art. We experience, in a very real way, the bliss of the creator, the intense concentration, the sheer hard work, the craft, the passion, the desire:

"To make things that count,
things that will be new.
And then the realisation that
Anything you do,
let it come from you.
Then it will be new."

Sunday in the Park with George is, at its essence, an examination of what makes artists tick, how and why they must create. Sondheim brings the same intense, systematic intellectual precision to the composition of his words and music that Seurat brought to his paintings. Studied up close, both the paintings and the music reveal the precision and meticulous attention to detail, the technique of the artist. Viewed from a distance, or experienced as a whole in the theatre, what is revealed is a perfect and complete vision, satisfying and edifying.

The final lines of ***Sunday in the Park with George*** provide his challenge to us all: "White. A blank page or canvas. So many possibilities."

Stuart Maunder
Director

SYNOPSIS

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

'The characters in the painting come to life and discuss their relationships with each other...'

Act I

ACT I

In 1884 George is completing his masterpiece which is simultaneously the backdrop and the feature of the musical. The characters in the painting come to life and discuss their relationships with each other and their thoughts and feelings. George is so obsessed with his work he neglects his mistress Dot, the main character of the painting. Dot then leaves George for a pastry baker, Louis, and emigrates to America.

ACT II

The second act is set in New York in 1984, one hundred years later where George (Seurat's grandson) is working with light sculptures. He is suffering from an equivalent of writer's block and is also struggling with the modern art world where his creations are dependent on commissions and patronage. At the end of the musical, George makes a pilgrimage to Paris where the painting in Act I is set. Dot appears and helps George to put his life together and move on.

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

STEPHEN SONDHEIM & JAMES LAPINE

20 – 27 July 2013
Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne
Composer Stephen Sondheim
Librettist James Lapine

First performed in 1984, New York.

Running time approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes including one interval.

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.
Book by James Lapine.

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine.
Originally produced on Broadway by The Shubert Organisation and Emanuel Azenberg.

By arrangement with Playwrights Horizon, Inc. New York City which produced the original production of ***Sunday In The Park with George*** in 1983.

By arrangement with Hal Leonard Australia Pty Ltd Exclusive agent for Music Theatre International (NY).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CVP, Deakin Motion.Lab, Hit Productions, Joe Petrolo, Just Imagine Productions, Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne Brass and Woodwind, Melbourne Theatre Company, Norwest, Opera Australia, Planet Engineering, Resolution X, Saxony, Show Technology.

Conductor	Phoebe Briggs
Director	Stuart Maunder
Set & Costume Designer	Anna Cordingley
Lighting Designer	Niklas Pajanti
Sound Designer	Jim Atkins
Production Manager	Michele Bauer
Stage Manager	Jessica Smithett
Deputy Stage Manager	Armando Licul
Repetiteurs	Phillipa Safey Loclan Mackenzie-Spencer Craig Dalton
Dialogue Coach	Anna McCrossin-Owen

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Act I

George, an artist	Alexander Lewis
Dot, his mistress	Christina O'Neill
An old Lady	Nancye Hayes
Her nurse	Dimity Shepherd
Jules, another artist	David Rogers-Smith
Yvonne, his wife	Antoinette Halloran
A boatman	John Brunato
Celeste #1, a shop girl	Olivia Cranwell
Celeste #2, another shop girl	Carrie Barr
Louise, the little daughter of Jules & Yvonne	Monique Heath/ Emily Chessum
Franz, coachman to Jules and Yvonne	Lyall Brooks
Frieda, a cook for Jules & Yvonne and wife to Franz	Noni McCallum
A soldier	Matthew McFarlane
Louis, a baker	Nathan Lay
Mr. & Mrs., an American couple	Lyall Brooks Dimity Shepherd
Hornplayer	Jeremy Kleeman
A boy playing in the river	Monique Heath/ Emily Chessum
A young man sitting on bank	Kirilie Blythman
A man lying on bank	Daniel Todd

Act II

George, an artist	Alexander Lewis
Marie, his grandmother	Christina O'Neill
Dennis, a technician	Lyall Brooks
Bob Greenberg, the museum director	David Rogers-Smith
Naomi Eisen, composer	Antoinette Halloran
Harriet Pawling, a patron of the arts	Dimity Shepherd
Billy Webster, her friend	Nathan Lay
A photographer	Kirilie Blythman
A museum assistant	Daniel Todd
Charles Redman, a visiting curator	John Brunato
Alex, an artist	Matthew McFarlane
Betty, an artist	Noni McCallum
Lee Randolph, the museum's publicist	Jeremy Kleeman
Blair Daniels, art critic	Nancye Hayes
A waitress	Olivia Cranwell
Elaine, George's former wife	Carrie Barr

ORCHESTRA VICTORIA

1st Violin	Matthew Hassall
2nd Violin	Rachel Gamer
Viola	Jason Bunn
Cello	Andrea Taylor
Horn	Anton Schroeder
Harp	Mary Anderson
Percussion	Conrad Nilsson
Reed 1	Stuart Byrne
Reed 2	Lachlan Davidson
Piano/Celeste	Phillipa Safey
Keyboard	Loclan MacKenzie-Spencer

Dot Illustration: Anna Cordingley.

ARTWORK CREDITS

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

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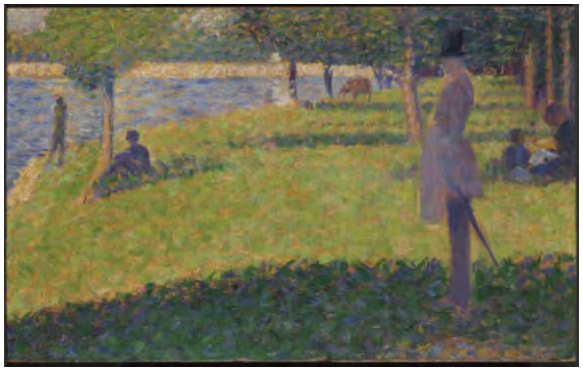

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1: *Young woman (study for Un dimanche a la Grande Jatte)*, Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo, The Netherlands. 31.2 x 16.2 cm; conte crayon on paper. Georges Seurat. 1884 -1885.

2: *Standing Man*. The National Gallery, London. Oil on Panel; 15.2 x 24.3cm. Georges Seurat. 1884.

3: *Young Woman Powdering herself.* The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London. Oil on Canvas; 95.5 x 79.5cm. Georges Seurat. 1888 - 1890.

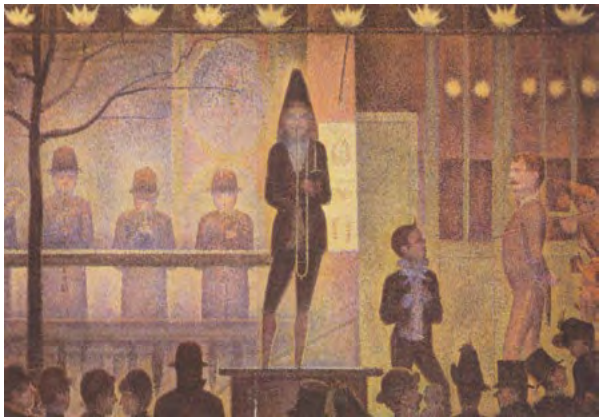
4: *Poseuses*. The Barnes Foundation, Philedelphia, PA, USA. Oil on Canvas; 200 x 250cm. Georges Seurat. 1887 - 1888.

5: *Bathing Place, Asineres*. The National Gallery, London. Oil on Canvas; 201x300cm. Georges Seurat. 1883 -1884.

6: *Seated and Standing Women*. Albright - Knox Art Gallery. Oil on Panel; 15.5 x 24.3cm. Georges Seurat. 1884.

7: *Chahut (Naturalist Quadrille)*. Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo, The Netherlands. Oil on Canvas; 170 x 141cm. Georges Seurat. 1889 - 1890.

7



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8: *Parade de Cirque*. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA. Oil on canvas. 99.7 x 149.9cm. Georges Seurat. 1887 – 1888.

9: *Compositional Study (large sketch) for La Grande Jatte*. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA. Oil on Canvas; 70.5 x 104.1cm. Georges Seurat. 1884, painted border 1889 - 1890.

10: *Circus*. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France. Oil on canvas. 186.2 x 151cm. Georges Seurat. 1890 – 1891.

11: *The Couple*. The British Museum, London, UK. Conte Crayon on Paper; 31.2 x 23.6cm. Georges Seurat. 1884.

12: *Landscape, Island of La Grande Jatte (Study for La Grande Jatte)*. The British Museum, London, UK. Conte Crayon on Paper; 42.2 x 62.8cm. Georges Seurat. 1884.

13: *La Tour Eiffel*. Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, CA, USA. Oil on Wood; 24 x 15cm. Georges Seurat. 1889.

A SUNDAY ON LA GRAND JATTE

BEHIND THE MASTERPIECE

'Art is Harmony. Harmony is the analogy of opposites, the analogy of similar elements of tone, of colour, and of line, considered according to their dominants and under the influence of lighting in gay, calm, or sad combinations.'

Georges Seurat, August 1890 [1]

3

- The painting was first displayed in Paris May 1886 at the final Impressionist exhibition.
- Two other artists refused to have Georges Seurat's painting exhibited alongside their own and his painting was to be viewed separately in the last room of the show.
- The picture was largely ignored by critics but championed by critic, Félix Fénéon who boldly stated that what was important about the painting was its revolutionary technique.
- In 1900 Lucie Breu Cousturier was the first proud owner of the painting after her father bought it for her from Seurat's family for 800 francs.
- Several decades later the astute American art collector (and trustee of the Art Institute of Chicago) Frederick Clay Bartlett purchased the painting from Lucie Breu Cousturier for $20,000 and soon the U.S. owned the painting.
- In the summer of 1924, Seurat's painting was proudly displayed at the Art Institute of Chicago.
- In 1930 a French consortium was unsuccessful in reportedly offering huge sums of money to reacquire the painting.
- French officials say the painting is the only true great French masterpiece that is not in France.
- La Grande Jatte in French means a shallow bowl or basin. It is now the name of an affluent suburb of Paris.
- In 1958 it left Chicago for the first time in 30 years.
- The painting was on loan to MOMA in New York for a major exhibition of Seurat. This remains the first and last time the picture was lent to another gallery. [2]

Research provided by Renee Atkinson, NGV Education

1: E. Lee. *The Aura of Neo-Impressionism: The WJ Holliday Collection*. Indianna University Press, 1983, p.12.

2: B. Thompson. *The Post-Impressionists*. Phaidon, New York, 1990, p.47.

3: Georges Seurat, French, 1859-1891, *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte* - 1884, 1884–86, Oil on canvas, 81 3/4 x 121 1/4 in. (207.5 x 308.1 cm), Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection, 1926.224, The Art Institute of Chicago. Photography © The Art Institute of Chicago.

BIOGRAPHIES

CREATIVE & CAST

CONDUCTOR
Phoebe Briggs

Background: Phoebe Briggs completed a Bachelor of Music at Melbourne University. She was a member of the Opera Australia music staff from 2002-2012 and was awarded the Foster Memorial Award for a Repetiteur as part of the Australian Singing Competition. In 2012 Phoebe was appointed Head of Music at Victorian Opera.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: *Nixon in China, Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, The Bear, Angelique, L'Elisir d'Amore.*

Other Companies: Repetiteur: Opera Australia (over 45 operas), IFAC (Tokyo), Opera Holland Park (London), OzOpera, Chamber Made, Company B (Belvoir St), Broome Opera Under the Stars, Victoria State Opera, Operalive, Eastern Metropolitan Opera. Conductor: Opera in the Paddock (Opera Northwest/OA), City Life Project (OzOpera). Assistant/cover conductor: Don Pasquale (IFAC/OA Tokyo), *The Magic Flute, The Merry Widow, Die Fledermaus, The Pearlfishers, Così fan tutte, A Little Night Music, The Mikado* (OA), *Guys and Dolls* (Ambassador Theatre Group). Festivals: Coriole, Mahler, Edinburgh International Children's Festival (including tour of UK and Northern Ireland), Castlemaine. Music Theatre: *Drowsy Chaperone, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Company (MTC), A Little Night Music, Sweeney Todd* (OA), *Annie, The Sound of Music* (SEL/Gordon Frost), *Phantom of the Opera, Oliver!* (Cameron Mackintosh), *Showboat* (LiveEnt/Marriner Productions), *Xanadu* (Philmark Entertainment), *Mamma Mia!, Sunset Boulevard.* Cabaret: An Evening with Dennis Olsen, Judy Glen, Per Musica.

Recordings: *Lakmé, The Mikado, Madeline Lee* (OA), *The Music of Henry Handel Richardson.*

DIRECTOR
Stuart Maunder

Background: Joined The Australian Opera as Stage Manager 1978, Staff Director 1981-87. Moving to the United Kingdom in 1991, Stuart joined The Royal Opera as a Staff Director while continuing to direct in Australia as well as regional UK, France and the USA. In 1999 Stuart returned to Australia as Artistic Administrator of Opera Australia. He was Executive Producer of Opera Australia from 2004 to 2009.

Other Companies: Directed for all the state opera companies in Australia. For Opera Australia: *Tales of Hoffmann, Manon, Gypsy Princess, Don Pasquale, Lindy, Trial by Jury, HMS Pinafore, Pirates of Penzance*. Most recent opera productions: *Rigoletto* (West Australian Opera), *The Mikado* (Opera Queensland). He was Artistic Director of APEC Cultural performance, Sydney Opera House 2007 and Australia's National Day at Expo Shanghai 2010. Stuart also directed the national tour of *Dusty, Shout!, 'Little Women'* for Kookaburra, *My Fair Lady, A Little Night Music* for Opera Australia and *Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber* (Australian, New Zealand and Asian tour).

Recordings: *Trial by Jury, HMS Pinafore, Pirates of Penzance, Patience, The Magic Flute, The Mikado.*

COSTUME & SET DESIGNER
Anna Cordingley

Background: Anna is an alumnus of the Victorian College of the Arts (Production Design) and a Masters Candidate at the University of Melbourne (Curatorship).

Other Companies: For Bell Shakespeare, *Phedre, Macbeth, Julius Caesar;* for White Night Melbourne *The Letter Project;* for Sydney Festival, *Inside, Meow Meow's Little Match Girl* (with Malthouse); for Chunky Move, *An Act of Now, Connected;* for Lucy Guerin Inc, *Human Interest Story;* for MIAF, *Richter/Meinhof-Opera, The Black Arm Band's Hidden Republic;* for Malthouse, *The Story of Mary Maclane By Herself, A Golem Story, Tis Pity She's A Whore, Sappho… in 9 Fragments, The Threepenny Opera* (with STC), *Elizabeth – Almost By Chance a Woman, Furious Mattress, One Night the Moon, Knives in Hens* (with STCSA), *Happy Days* (with Belvoir), *A Commercial Farce, Rogue, Not Like Beckett & Autobiography of Red;* for Daniel Schlusser, *Peer Gynt*. Anna has designed for Simon Barley (Bambuco) with *The Eighth Bridge over Tyne* (UK) and *Spine, Lille 2004* (France). Her exhibition designs include *War Horse & The Breath of Life* at Arts Centre Melbourne; *An Account of Bridges* at the Baltic Contemporary Art Centre/Sage Gateshead (UK); & facilitation for Brook Andrew in *Colony* in the 2007 Den Haag Sculpture Exhibition (The Netherlands). Anna was recipient of both the 2012 & 2013 Greenroom Award for Design & the 2012 Kristian Fredrikson Memorial Scholarship for Contribution to the Performing Arts in Australia.

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Niklas Pajanti

Background: Niklas studied Lighting Design at the Victorian College of the Arts and Architectural Lighting at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. His career path has ranged across contemporary art forms and performance styles including opera, circus, musical theatre, dance, drama, comedy, events, exhibitions and public spaces. He has delivered designs nationally and internationally to Europe, Scandinavia, North America and Asia.

Other Companies: Lighting designer: *Angels In America, Hollywood Costume, 247 Days* (World Premiere), *Inside* (World Premiere), *The Wild Duck, An Act of Now, Game Masters* (World Premiere), *Queen Lear, The School For Wives, William Kentridge-5 Themes, Australia Day* (World Premiere), *Babyteeth* (World Premiere), *Spicks and Speck-tacular – The Finale, Spring Awakening, When The Rain Stops Falling* (World Premiere).

SOUND DESIGNER
Jim Atkins

Background: Jim Atkins has a long career in audio production. He has credits on well over 100 major label CD releases. Jim worked with the ABC from the mid-seventies and specifically for ABC Classic FM since the early nineties and has been involved in many concert broadcasts and radio feature productions. Jim left the ABC at the beginning of 2010 and has since pursued a freelance career.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: This year Jim was sound designer for the Victorian Opera production of *Nixon in China*.

Other Companies: Sound design/operator *Namatjira* (Big hART production); Sound operator *Bliss and The Merry Widow* (Opera Australia).

Recordings: Jim has engineering credits on the Paul Kelly release *Conversations with Ghosts* and a live recording of *Shane Warne - The Musical*.

CELESTE #2 / ELAINE
Carrie Barr

Background: Carrie Barr studied a Bachelor of Music in Voice at the Conservatorium of Music in Adelaide. She is one of Australia's most versatile performers in Opera and Music Theatre with leading roles spanning over the last 25 years. She has also spent the last 12 years singing with Opera Australia and is a teacher at Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

Other Companies: Olga: *Merry Widow* (Opera Australia), First Bridesmaid: *Marriage of Figaro* (Opera Australia), Isabel: *Pirate of Penzance* (Opera Australia), Catherine: *Sound Garden* (Oz Opera), Valerie/Control: *Software* (Oz Opera) , Queen of the Night: *The Magic Flute* (Co Opera), Annie/Bird lady cover: *Mary Poppins* (Disney), Jerry Springer the Opera: *Baby Jane cover* (Opera House), Cleo: *Side show Alley* (QPAC), Marie Nostradamas: *Nostradamas* (Stage by Stage Prod), Carrie: *Carousel* (Production Co.), Jellylorum/ Griddlebone: *Cats* (Really Useful Co.), Cosette: *Les Miserables* (Cameron Mackintosh), Gloria: *Return to the Forbidden Planet* (Kevin Jacobson), Sheila: *Hair* (Elston,Hocking &Woods).

Recordings: *Turandot* – Opera Australia (DVD), *Mikado* - Opera Australia (DVD), *H.M.A.S Pinafore/ Trial By Jury* – Opera Australia (DVD), *Mary Poppins* – Original Australian Cast, *The Kind Of Country* – ABC (radio play), *Adelaide Jazz Connection* with Don Burrows and James Morrison (CD).

CREATIVE & CAST
BIOGRAPHIES

YOUNG MAN / PHOTOGRAPHER
Kirilie Blythman

Background: Bachelor of Music Performance, (Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne) in 2011. Recipient of the 2011 Walter Kirby Singing Scholarship and the Athenaeum Competition vocal prize.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Princess: *Puss in Boots*, Chorus in *Nixon in China*, Soloist: *Opera on a White Night* Gala Concert, *2012 Gala Concert, Opera by Twilight* (RACV Healesville Country Club), *Musical Lunchtime* (Victorian Opera Christmas recital), *Master of Music* (Opera Performance) *Work in Progress, Sing Your Own Opera,* Thisbe in *La Cenerentola* for Education Program, Moomba Opening Night Concert and Master of Music (Opera Performance) student recital.

Other Companies: Soloist in Family Classic Kids *3 SING* (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra) Ceclia: *Bohemios*, Cantaora: *La Verbena de la Paloma*, Helen: *La Belle Helene* (Lyric Opera of Melbourne); Mercedes: *Carmen* (In Good Company); Susan: *A Dinner Engagement,* First Knitter: *A Game of Chance* (Music Vocal Company) ; soloist with Box Hill Chorale, MUCS, Kapelle Singers, Melbourne University Faculty Choir.

FRANZ / MR. / DENNIS
Lyall Brooks

Background: Lyall most recently appeared on stage in Red Stitch's *Penelope*. His previous appearance for Red Stitch, in *The Pride*, earned him a nomination for a 2012 Green Room Award. Other theatre credits include Melbourne Theatre Company's *The Heretic, Urban Display Suite* for Ross Mollison International, *Guys & Dolls* for Donmar/Ambassador, *Sugar* and *Mame* for The Production Company, and several shows for Magnormos, including another Green Room nomination for *The Thing about Men*.

On screen he has appeared in *Rake, You're Skitting Me!, Ben Elton Live From Planet Earth, Tripping Over, Neighbours* and *Blue Heelers,* and feature films *Any Questions for Ben?* and the upcoming film *Dirt Cheap*. He is also an established animation voiceover artist, working on international projects *Get Ace, Sumo Mouse, SheZow*, and the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Award (AACTA) nominated *Flea-Bitten!*

Other Companies: Tom: *Fat Pig,* George: *Savages* (World Premiere), Quinn: *Penelope* (Australian Premiere), Father: *House*, Phillip: *The Pride* (Australian Premiere), Geoff: *The Heretic* (Australian Premiere), Andy: *The Kiss of Death* (World Premiere), Soloist: *Urban Display Suite* (World Premiere), Knuckles: *Sugar,* Brandy Bottle Bates: *Guys & Dolls*, Uncle Geoff: *Mame*, Man: *The Thing about Men* (Australian Premiere).

Recordings: *A Bunch of Ratbags*: Premiere Cast Recording.

BOATMAN / CHARLES REDMAN
John Brunato

Background: John Brunato graduated from the Canberra School of Music with a Bachelor of Music. He then completed a Graduate Diploma in music from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music.

Other companies: John was a young artist with Opera Australia and then continued on as a principal artist. John has also sung with Western Australian Opera, New Zealand Opera and Canberra Opera. Roles include Mephistofeles, Colline and Schaunard. He has also covered Don Giovanni, Scarpia and Toreadore.

Concert Repertoire: John's concert repertoire includes *the Messiah, St Matthew Passion* and Brahms' *Requiem*.

LOUISE / BOY
Emily Chessum

Background: Emily Chessum started dancing at 2 years of age. Her love for dance has grown over the years and she studies all types of dancing including jazz, tap, classical and contemporary. Emily has been working with her singing coach for the past 6 years and recently sat her first vocal exam and received honours. In 2011 Emily combined her love for dancing and singing with her passion for musical theatre and has continued on this path ever since.

Other Companies: Tiny Tim in *Ebenezer Scrooge* (MOaRTZ Inc, 2013), Ensemble *My Son Pinocchio* (Latrobe Theatre Company, 2013), Marta in *The Sound of Music* (Latrobe Theatre Company, 2011).

CREATIVE & CAST
BIOGRAPHIES

CELESTE #1 / WAITRESS
Olivia Cranwell

Background: Bachelor of Music Performance (Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne). Bachelor of Arts, University of Melbourne. Graduate of Young Actor's Studio, NIDA. Lisa Gasteen Opera Summer School 2011. Finalist, Herald Sun Aria 2011: Semi-finalist, IFAC Australian Singing Competition 2011: Winner, South Eastern Arts Festival Aria 2011: Third place, National Liederfest 2011.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Puss: *Puss in Boots,* Chorus: *Nixon in China,* Queen Clementine: *Sleeping Beauty*, Clorinda: *La Cenerentola* for Education Program, Gossip: *Angelique,* Cherubino (cover): *The Marriage of Figaro,* Sesto (cover): *Julius Caesar,* Popova (cover): *The Bear,* Robber Girl: *Snow Queen*, God: Noye's *Fludde*. Soloist: *Opera on a White Night Gala* Concert, *Gala Concert 2012*, *Master of Music* (Opera Performance) *Work in Progress, Sing Your Own Opera,* Moomba Opening Night Concert and Master of Music (Opera Performance) Student Recital, *Assembly.*

Other Companies: *The Ring. Wagner*: *Animated* (More Than Opera); Young Woman and Reporter: *Pecan Summer* (Short Black Productions); title role: *Carmen* (In Good Company); Papagena: *The Magic Flute* (VCA Symphony Orchestra); Plaintiff/ Angelina: *Trial by Jury,* Hebe: *HMS Pinafore* (Savoy Opera Company); Clytemnestra: *The Greek Tragedies* (NIDA); Chorus: *Lucia di Lammermoor, Madama Butterfly* (Opera Australia).

YVONNE / NAOMI EISEN
Antoinette Halloran

Background: Graduate of University of Melbourne and Victorian College of the Arts.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Fiordiligi: *Così fan tutte;* Adina: *L'elisir d'amore;* Maria: *Midnight Son*.

Other Companies: title roles in *Madama Butterfly and Rusalka*, Mimi in *La bohème,* Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Green Room Award), Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni, Johanna in *Sweeney Todd,* Despina in *Così fan tutte,* Gianetta in *The Gondoliers*, Ellen in *Lakmé* and Josephine in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Opera Australia); title role in *Madama Butterfly*, Mimi in *La bohème* (New Zealand Opera); Micaela: *Carmen* (State Opera of South Australia); title role in *The Merry Widow* (Opera Queensland); Donna Elvira, Fiordiligi, Cio-Cio-San, Pamina in *The Magic Flute* and Musetta in *La bohème* (Melbourne Opera).

Concert Appearances: HK Philharmonic Orchestra, Sydney Philharmonia, Royal Melbourne Philharmonic, Brodsky Quartet and the Melbourne, Adelaide, Tasmanian, Canberra, Queensland Symphony Orchestras and concerts in China, Japan and Indonesia. Regular television appearances on Spicks & Specks, Operatunity Oz and Art Nation.

Recordings: *Puccini Romance* (ABC Classics).

OLD LADY / BLAIR DANIELS
Nancye Hayes

Background: Nancye Hayes OAM is one of Australia's favourite theatrical actresses. She is an accomplished actor, dancer, singer, choreographer and director. She began her career with J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd as a chorus member in *My Fair Lady*. A few years later she won the title role in *Sweet Charity* and her acclaimed performance quickly established her as a musical theatre star. Nancye has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Variety Club, the Green Room Awards Association and the Sydney Theatre Awards and the Helpmann Awards.

Other Companies: Theatre credits: *Chicago, Sweeney Todd, Guys & Dolls* and *42nd Street*. (J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd) *Annie* (The Gordon Frost Organisation) *Grey Gardens, Follies, The Music Man* and *Funny Girl* (The Production Co.), Turns (CDP Theatre Productions), *Murderers* and *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks* (Ensemble), *A Little Night Music* and *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia), Metro Street (STCSA), and *Summer Rain* (STC). Directing credits: *The Boy from Oz* (The Production Co.), *Crazy for You* and *The World Goes Round* (WAAPA), Australia's Leading Ladies Concert (Brisbane Festival), *The Wizard of Oz* (GFO/SEL/ Macks Entertainment), *The 3 Divas* (Christine Dunstan Productions).

LOUISE / BOY
Monique Heath

Background: Monique is a student at the May Downs School of Dancing, where she has studied all types of dancing, singing, acting and musical theatre since she was two years old.

Other Companies: Ensemble: *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, Annie: *Annie*, Dancer: *The Silver Rose*, and *Candyman*.

Film/TV: Young Jane: *Predestination,* Footy Kid: *Problems,* Mogs Macrory: *The Eye of the Storm*, Ruby: *Rush* Series 3.

CREATIVE & CAST
BIOGRAPHIES

HORN PLAYER / LEE RANDOLPH
Jeremy Kleeman

Background: Jeremy Kleeman studied a Bachelor of Music at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music (MCM) from 2009 to 2011. In 2012 he was accepted into Victorian Opera and the MCM's new two-year Master of Music (Opera Performance) course. Jeremy was a finalist in the 2012 IFAC Australian Singing Competition, winning the Merenda Prize for study in Italy and the David Harper Award in the final held at the Sydney Opera House. At the MCM Jeremy was the recipient of the Victor Fox Award (2009), Lady Turner Exhibition in Music (2010), Cassidy Bequest (2011), Harold Fisher Opera Scholarship B'Nai B'rith (2011), Lady Turner Exhibition in Music (2011), Muriel Cheek Memorial Scholarship (2011) and was an Awardee of the Acclaim Sleath Lowrey Scholarship 2012.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Ogre: *Puss in Boots,* Chorus: *Nixon in China,* Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* for Education Program. Soloist: *Opera on a White Night* Gala Concert, *2012 Gala Concert, Master of Music* (Opera Performance) *Work in Progress, In The Beginning Was The Word, Sing Your Own Opera,* Moomba Opening Night Concert and Master of Music (Opera Performance) student recital, *Assembly.*

Concert Repertoire: Soloist: Fauré *Requiem,* Schubert *Mass in G.*

LOUIS / BILLY WEBSTER
Nathan Lay

Background: Nathan completed his Bachelor of Music at Melba Conservatorium of Music in 2008. Whilst completing this course, he was the recipient of multiple scholarships including the Melba Conservatorium Scholarship and three time recipient of the Robert Salzer Scholarship. Nathan was awarded the Gertrude Johnson Scholarship to attend The Opera Studio Melbourne in 2010. That same year, Nathan won the National Liederfest and was named Australian Music Events' Opera Scholar of the Year, enabling him to perform alongside singers such as David Hobson and Rosario La Spina. In 2012 Nathan was runner-up in the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir's 'Singer of the Year' competition, winner of the Kantor Encouragement Award at the Melbourne Recital Centre's 'Great Romantics Competition', and was runner-up and winner of the People's Choice Award at the 2012 Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Aria competition.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Chorus: *Nixon in China.* King: *Puss in Boots.* Soloist: *Opera on a White Night* Gala Concert. Chorus: *Biographica*, Soloist: *2012 Gala Concert.*

Other Companies: Schaunard: *La Bohème*, Guglielmo: *Così fan tutte* (Melbourne Opera), Emperor: *The Emperor of Atlantis* (IOpera).

Concert Repertoire: Mozart: *Coronation Mass*, Fauré: *Requiem*, Brahms: *Requiem*, Handel: *Messiah*, Paladilhe: *Messe de St François d'Assise*, Beethoven: *Choral fantasia in C minor and Mass in C Major,* Orff: *Carmina Burana,* Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and *The First Nowell*.

GEORGE
Alexander Lewis

Background: Alexander Lewis was born in Sydney and studied Musical Theatre at WAAPA. His career began in Australia in musical theatre before he commenced his operatic studies at The Merola Opera Program in San Francisco and then joined the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program (LYADP) in 2010.

Other Companies: For the Metropolitan Opera; Borsa: *Rigoletto,* First Guard: *Manon* (Debut). For Metropolitan/LYADP; Ferrando: *Cosi fan tutte*, Vasek: *The Bartered Bride*. For The Really Useful Group; Raoul: *The Phantom of the Opera*. For Opera Australia; Anthony Hope: *Sweeney Todd*. For Sea Biscuit Productions; Frederick Barrett: *Titanic - The Musical*.

Concert Repertoire: Bangalow Music Festival 2013, Britten's *Serenade for Tenor and Horn*. Other highlights include the Metropolitan's 2012 Summer Recital series, The 2012 Manchester Music Festival, Poisson in The Opera Orchestra of New York's performance of *Andriana Lecouvreur,* Australia Plays Broadway 2009 in Carnegie Hall, and APEC Australia's 2007 Gala Cultural Performance.

Recordings: The Met Live in HD *Rigoletto* DVD (Borsa).

FRIEDA / BETTY
Noni McCallum

Background: Noni McCallum was born in and raised in Geelong and studied at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (BA Music Theatre, 2004). Noni has travelled the world as understudy to popular children's pop group Hi-5 and can be seen on Series 9 and 10 as Chatterbox and Jup Jup. She has most recently returned from the United States where she has been studying Improvisational Comedy and Musical Improvisation at the Upright Citizens Brigade in New York City.

Other Companies: Minnie Fay, *Hello Dolly* (Magnormos 2011), Kate O'Hare, *Transport* (New Musicals Australia 2011).

CREATIVE & CAST
BIOGRAPHIES

SOLDIER / ALEX
Matthew McFarlane

Background: Matthew McFarlane studied Musical Theatre at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and graduated in 2007.

Other Companies: Benedict Perring: *True Minds* (Melbourne Theatre Company), Danny Zuko: *Grease* (Court Theatre NZ), Phantom/Raoul Cover: *Love Never Dies* (Really Useful Group), Liverlips Louis: *Guys and Dolls* (The Donmar Warehouse), Nick/Schlomo Cover: *FAME The Musical* (GFO), Linville: *Damn Yankees* (The Production Company), Jules/Ensemble: *Priscilla Queen of the Desert The Musical*. Lally: *Vernon God Little* (Really Useful Group).

Matt appeared as a Finalist in Channel 10's *I Will Survive*. Matt has also appeared in guest roles on *Neighbours* and *Blue Heelers*.

DOT / MARIE
Christina O'Neill

Background: Christina has worked extensively in the Australian musical theatre, film & television and theatre industries since graduating from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (BA Music Theatre) in 2005. Most recently, she featured in Midsumma Festival's production of *Gaybies* directed by Daniel Clarke and as April White in *Savage in Limbo* for Workhorse Theatre Company, directed by Stuart Maunder. In 2012, she appeared as Victoria in *The Motherf**ker with the Hat* directed by David Bell at Red Stitch Actors Theatre and proudly joins the company as an ensemble member in 2013.

In 2010, Christina received a Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical for her portrayal of Christmas Eve in *Avenue Q* directed by Jonathon Biggins. Other career highlights have included playing Maddy in *Prodigal* directed by Dean Bryant; Lady of the Lake (alternate) in *Monty Python's Spamalot* directed Mike Nichols; and as a Diva in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert, the Musical* directed by Simon Phillips. Film and television credits include *City Homicide* (Channel 7), *The Great Raid* (Miramax) and *Jeopardy* (BBC). Christina has been a proud member of Equity since 2006.

Other Companies: Rose: *Gaybies*, April White: *Savage in Limbo*, Victoria: *The Motherf**ker With The Hat*, Maddy: Prodigal, Christmas Eve: *Avenue Q, the Musical,* Our Girl: *Tell Me On A Sunday,* Lady of the Lake (alternate): *Monty Python's Spamalot*, Diva: *Priscilla Queen of the Desert, the Musical* (World Premiere).

Recordings: *Priscilla Queen of the Desert: The Musical Soundtrack.*

CREATIVE & CAST

BIOGRAPHIES

JULES / BOB GREENBERG
David Rogers-Smith

Background: David Rogers-Smith is highly regarded as a concert and opera singer as well as enjoying enormous success in musical theatre.

Other Companies: Piangi in *The Phantom Of The Opera* for The Really Useful Company, Brujon and Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables* for Cameron Mackintosh, The Slave in *Salome* for Kirov Opera/ Melbourne International Festival, Canio in *I Pagliacci*, Pinkerton in *Madam Butterfly*, Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, title role in *Faust* and Don José in *Carmen* all for Melbourne Opera. Kromov in *The Merry Widow* and The Ziegfeld Tenor in *Funny Girl* both for The Production Company, Michelle in *The Saint Of Bleeker Street* for Melbourne Lyric Opera and *Gaugin-A Synthetic Life* for Chamber Made Opera/Melbourne International Festival.

Concert Repertoire: *Follies In Concert* for Crown Showroom, concerts for Barossa Music Festival, *Best Of British* for Australian Pops Orchestra, Andrew Lloyd Webber concerts with Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Requiem* with Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society, title role in *St. Nicolas* with Geelong Choral Society, soloist for Melbourne Town Hall Proms Series and *Missa Criolla* for National Boys' Choir.

Recordings: David Rogers-Smith – *A Little Bit Of Love*.

NURSE / MRS. / HARRIET PAWLING
Dimity Shepherd

Background: Dimity Shepherd was born in Perth and is a graduate of WAAPA.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Secretary to Mao in *Nixon in China*, Dargonelle in *Sleeping Beauty,* Cherubino in *The Marriage Of Figaro*, Clara in *Midnight Son*, Orphee in *Orphee et Eurydice*, Alice in *Through The Looking Glass*, Arsamene in *Xerxes*, Nireno in *Julius Caesar* and Lucy in *The Threepenny Opera*, Jazz in *How To Kill Your Husband (And Other Handy Household Hints)*.

Other Companies: Cherubino in *The Marriage Of Figaro* and Rosina in *The Barber Of Seville* both for Opera Australia, *Carmen* for Oz Opera, Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* and Stephano in *Romeo & Juliet,* both for Opera Queensland, *Carmen* for Melbourne Opera and *Ruggiero* in Handel's *Alcina* for Jung St. Polten Oper in Vienna. She created the title role in the world premiere season of Jonathan Mill's *The Ghost Wife* at the Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney festivals and the BITE02 festival in London, appeared as Rebecca in Opera Australia's seasons of Paul Grabowsky's *Love In The Age Of Therapy* and created the lead role in Chamber Made Opera's premiere season of *Crossing Live* and the role of Elizabeth in the stage version of Helen Garner's *The Children's Bach*.

Concert Repertoire: Sculthorpe's *String Quartet No.13 Island Dreaming* in the Sydney Festival, Ravel's *L'Enfant et le Sortilege* and *Messiah* for the Melbourne Symphony, Vaughan-Williams' *Serenade to Music* for the Melbourne Recital Centre, and the Australian premiere performance of Goliyov's *Ayre* for the 2012 Fremantle Music Festival. She regularly gives opera concert performances for Victorian Opera and is one of the founders of corporate and major events entertainment group, Divas Inc.

MAN
Daniel Todd

Background: Born in Malaysia and raised in Melbourne tenor Daniel Todd has attained a Bachelor of Music (Hons) (Melbourne Conservatorium of Music) and Bachelor of Law (University of Melbourne). After participating in Victorian Youth Opera productions, Daniel joined VO's Developing Artist Program from 2011-2013. He has won the RMP Aria, Opera Society Young Artist Scholarship and Faculty Aria (Melbourne Conservatorium of Music). He has also been a prize-winner in the IFAC Australian Singing Competition, German Australian Opera Grant, National Liederfest, South-Eastern Aria and the Sleath Lowrey Award.

Victorian Opera Repertoire: Puss: *Puss in Boots,* Chorus: *Nixon in China,* Prince Waldheim: *Sleeping Beauty,* Don Curzio: *The Marriage of Figaro,* Testo: *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* and Midas: *The Fight Between Phoebus and Pan* (Baroque Triple Bill), Tamino: *The Magic Flute*, The Witch: *Hansel and Gretel* and Prince's Messenger: *La Cenerentola* for Education Program, Tamino: *The Magic Flute* (Cover), Tom Rakewell; *The Rake's Progress* (Cover), Zen: *What Next* and Master Peter: *Master Peter's Puppet Show* (Double Bill) (Covers), Mick Davoren: *The Cockatoos* (world première), Ham: *Noye's Fludde*. Soloist: *Opera on a White Night* Gala Concert, *Assembly.*

Other Companies: Pluto: *Orpheus in the Underworld* (Monash Opera Ensemble), Lord Tolloler: *Iolanthe* (Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Victoria), Shepherd / Soldier: *King Arthur* (Melbourne University Choral Society), Monteverdi's *Eighth Book of Madrigals* (E21 with Andrew Lawrence-King).

Concert repertoire: JS Bach, *Mass in B Minor, Messiah* (Handel and Mozart versions), Haydn: *Creation,* Gounod *St Cecilia Mass*, Berlioz: *Requiem*, Puccini: *Messa di Gloria*, Ramírez: *Misa Criolla*, Chisholm: *Kursk: An Oratorio Requiem* (world première).

George Illustration: Anna Cordingley.

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Richard Mills

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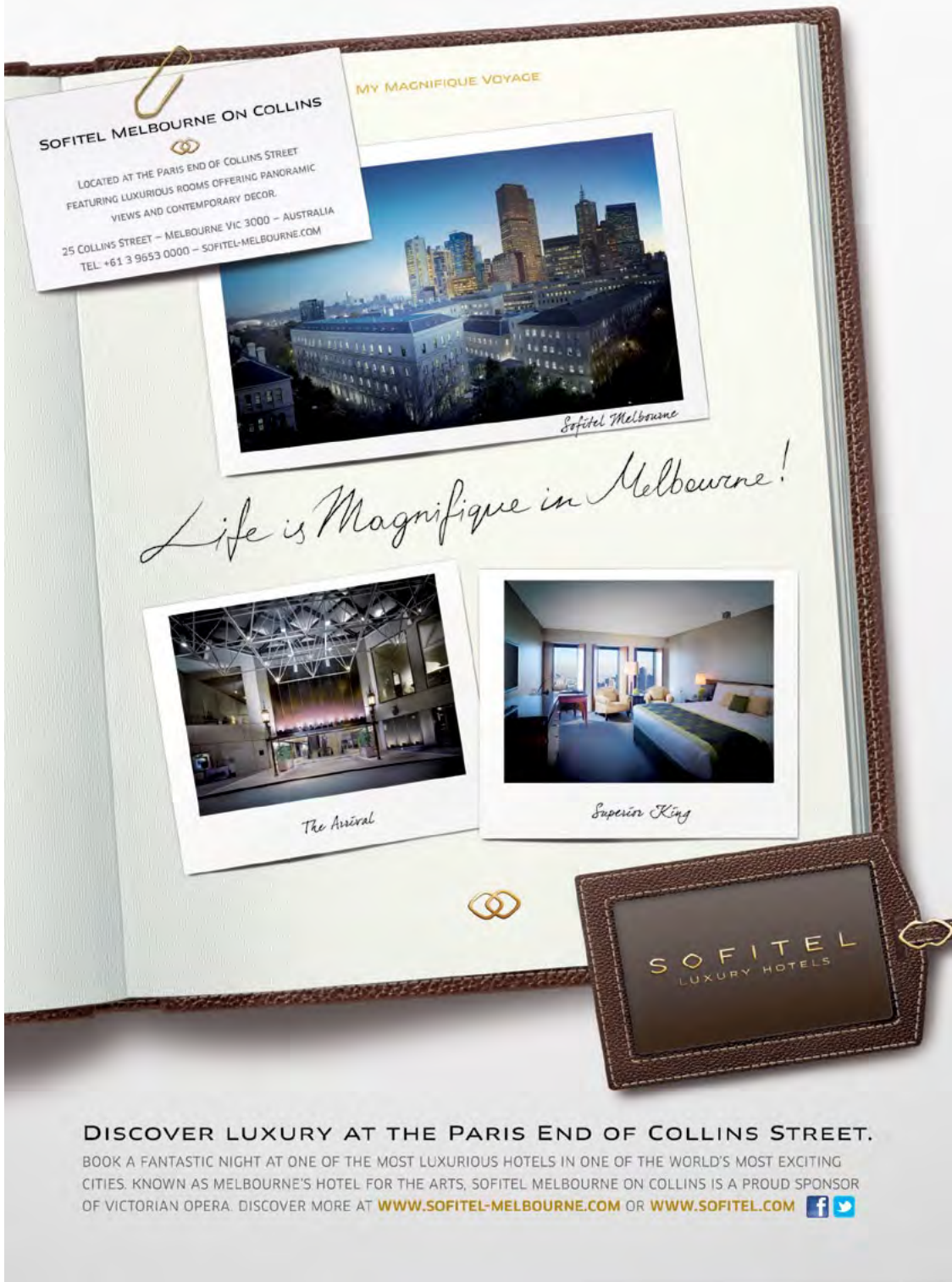

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