



Victorian  
Opera

*Giuseppe Verdi*

# LA TRAVIATA

Presented in association with Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini

Her Majesty's Theatre

17-29 May 2014





Victorian  
Opera



CRUSH

CRUSH WINES & SILVERWOOD ESTATE

PROUD PARTNERS OF  
**VICTORIAN  
OPERA**



Crush Wines and Silverwood Estate are proud to offer Patrons of Victorian Opera  
**20% DISCOUNT** on ALL Silverwood Estate wines purchased through  
Crush's online partner Liquormart.

Head to [www.liquormart.com.au](http://www.liquormart.com.au) and enter the voucher code **VICOPERA**.

## Artistic Director & Conductor's Message



*La traviata* is both a dramatic and musical masterpiece: because the opera contains such an abundance of memorable and great musical moments, its power and logic as a dramatic text are often not completely appreciated. Moreover its very popularity and familiarity can make us take it for granted.

This production sees the work afresh, capturing the essence of the piece, presenting the factual reality of the Parisian mid-century “demi-monde” as the background to the trajectory of the principal characters – which is realised in a non-realistic narrative mode, via an inspired scenography which refines and distils the emotional journey of Violetta, Germont and Alfredo.

Victorian Opera is proud to present the work of legendary designer, Josef Svoboda, in Australia for the first time. His partnership with director Henning Brockhaus has bequeathed to us a production which itself has become iconic, manifesting the world and the story of

Violetta in a contemporary theatrical language which embraces both realism and profound psychological insight simultaneously. Such a theatrical process is at once consonant with the nature of opera, which is by nature of the form, an exploration of interior reality and state of being through music. And it is Verdi, the master dramatist through music, forged with such technical mastery, clarity, humanity, and human understanding and impeccable taste and judgement who has given the world such a treasure for exploration and interpretation.

I am delighted to welcome Australian soprano Jessica Pratt to Melbourne for these performances. Jessica has carved an important career in Italy in the bel canto repertoire, most recently as Lucia (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) at La Scala. Similarly, it is a pleasure to welcome tenor Alessandro Scotto di Luzio for his Australian debut and to invite the great Australian baritone, José Carbó back to the company. All have been generous colleagues, and have been great mentors and examples for our young artists.

I would like to thank director Henning Brockhaus – a man of great spirit and intellect – and a great European, and his wonderful colleague Valentina Escobar who have been a joy in the rehearsal room and our colleagues at the Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini in Jesi, especially General Manager William Graziosi, who has helped greatly to make this *La traviata* possible in our company. Enjoy.

**- Richard Mills, Artistic Director & Conductor**

## Director's Message



In most of the stagings of *La traviata*, even from the very beginning of its history it could be said, the sharp point of the social and moral criticism inherent in the story of Marié Duplessis, then of Marguerite Gautier in “*La dama delle camelie*”, and then of Violetta Valéry, has been deliberately removed. Verdi himself had had premonitions about this and gave in on this very important aspect by shifting the entire story to the 18th century, in the hope that the temporal distance would make the topic of the opera, which burned with scorching contemporaneity, as Dumas desired, acceptable to the audience. *La traviata* was too “close”. Even setting the story in the right period, in 1850 or a little later, as is now common usage, the perspective does not change, for *La traviata* remains an opera in costume and not, as was originally conceived, an opera in contemporary costume. The historical distance persists in any case, obstructing every possible actualisation of the facts and problems represented in the scene.

Another crucial matter is that nothing is left of that which Dumas characterised with the expression “*demi-monde*”, or in reference to Violetta’s salon:

“*Ce cloaque splendide*”. What is usually seen is a bonbonnière of costumes and stagings, in which an almost abstract love story takes place. Instead, it is extremely important to understand that Violetta is a “whore”, as clearly and literally stated by Giuseppe Verdi. The world of *La traviata* and the male customs that were called “*La maladie du Siècle*” – that is, the refusal of the rational bourgeois world, the search for adventure, pleasure and amusement, as well as the serious physical repercussions linked to sex and prostitution – are aspects which are often concealed or just evoked. In order for certain situations and attitudes to emerge, what Dumas’ novel tells us is more useful. So, we start with the financial and social defeat of Violetta, the selling of her furniture, followed by her mental defeat which follows the death of her great love. The point that interests us is her personal journey, from the superficiality of a society in which she lived the life of a happy commodity, towards her human emancipation, her choice of a life of real and deep sentiments and, obviously, Alfredo’s inability to follow her. This is the story’s currency, and it is always contemporary because it is true and human, beyond the ages.

In this staging, the action takes place around 1870, not long before the Paris Commune. This is for aesthetic and social reasons: the fashion at the time was much more sensual and refined than that of twenty years earlier, and the social opulence and decadence are historically delineated with clarity. The costumes are inspired by the paintings of Giovanni Boldini, the bard of the female beau monde in Paris at the end of the century; impalpable dresses, characters who are not well

clothed or are very lightly dressed, because the truth is that this here is not a banquet in a distinguished residence, but the parlour of the most beautiful prostitutes in Paris.

As for the sets, the only fixed element is an enormous mirror in front of the wall, which on one hand limits and concentrates the action on one focal point, and on the other, acts as a reflection and estrangement of the truth of a drama which is just that, in that it reflects, for the umpteenth time, the sacrifice of a creature who is the tragic outcome of erotic male voyeurism. The mirror, therefore, reflects the action on stage. The individual scenes are instead painted on large canvases that lie on the floor like enormous carpets above which the actors move; a collage of various paintings with erotic motifs taken from period prints. This mix between painting and reality creates, metaphorically, a kaleidoscope of associations and suggestions, and when, in the end, there are no more images and the floor is desolately bare, this means that the time of illusions is over.

All the necessary props are situated on the two sides outside the action of the mirror, and are in view. The directorial methodology is intentionally "epic" according to the Brechtian model: in front of the audience, a story materially constructed in real time is told; minor figures and members of the chorus enter the action, bringing what they need with them and openly showing the scene. This is because we are interested in the actions, the feelings, the attitudes and how they change – we know the plot by heart. In traditional theatre, the audience watches like an eye-witness, or rather, like

a voyeur who spies through the keyhole to watch action which takes place independently beyond the curtain, external and foreign. The voyeuristic component is not negated here – on the contrary, it is exalted through repeated mechanisms of mixings and reflections that lead to an identification with the narration which is as concrete as it is psychological.

As well as telling the story, we are also telling that which is not written, neither with words nor with music. At the same time, we are also telling that which happened before a particular situation, obviously that which is found "below the text" – that is, intentions and real states of mind, the contradictions between the lines. In this sense, the mirror acts perfectly as an attractor of reality, offering at the same time a multiplicity of perspectives. The spectator sees the scene horizontally but also sees the vertical reflection, where everything that takes place is viewed from above, "zenithly". This vision is entirely new in theatre, and seems to offer information which is additional, almost not permitted. The mirror incontrovertibly and unavoidably throws the audience into the action, blurring the victim and the guilty, all of us responsible today against that world of "weaknesses" of which Violetta was a part.

**- Henning Brockhaus, Director**

## Managing Director's Message



On behalf of Victorian Opera I welcome you to Verdi's masterpiece, *La traviata*. This production marks the opening of Chapter Two; Richard Mills' second year at the helm of the company.

For me personally though, it marks my first staged production as Managing Director of what I believe to be Australia's most exciting and innovative opera company.

This production truly is an opera of firsts. It is the first time the company has staged a Verdi opera, the first time the company has collaborated with Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini to bring one of their famed productions to an Australian theatre, and the first time the renowned designer Josef Svoboda's work has been seen on an Australian stage.

This production also marks the role debut of Jessica Pratt as Violetta, straight from her triumph as Lucia at La Scala. Perhaps more importantly, this is Jessica's debut in a production in her home country and we are incredibly proud that she has chosen Victorian Opera for this honour. We also welcome tenor Alessandro Scotti di Luzio in his Australian debut in the role of Alfredo and acclaimed international director Henning Brockhaus in his first Australian production. In the role of Giorgio, we are delighted to welcome back baritone José Carbó to the company.

Victorian Opera exists to provide experiences to Victoria on a variety of levels. This year, our mainstage work takes us from the glamour of this celebrated production of *La traviata*, through music theatre (*Into the Woods*) to the commissioning of new work (*The Riders*). However, our work exists on much more than the Melbourne stage; our education and community engagement programs around the state continue to amaze me as we 'Enable Victoria to Sing'. Our Master of Music (Opera Performance) course mentors and develops the next generation of Australian singers and répétiteurs our access initiatives enable more and more people to experience the extraordinary window on the world that we call opera.

I hope you enjoy this evening of 'firsts' and truly hope that you come back for seconds!

**- Andrew Snell, Managing Director**



Victorian  
Opera

# WHAT'S YOUR WISH?

Victorian Opera wishes to create a world that is magnificent, immense and exhilarating.

Through the generosity of your donation, we can be at the forefront of creating new Australian opera, engage exemplary artists, share the magic of live opera and develop the new generation of opera audiences.

For more information about our Annual Giving Campaign, please contact Caroline Buckley, Philanthropy Executive, on 03 9012 6659.

## DONATE ONLINE

Please visit [victorianopera.com.au/support](http://victorianopera.com.au/support)



# LA TRAVIATA

17 - 29 May 2014

Her Majesty's Theatre Melbourne

Composer Giuseppe Verdi

Librettist Francesco Maria Piave

First performed in 1853, Venice.

Running time approximately 2 hours 50 minutes including two intervals.

*La traviata* is presented in association with Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Harp provided by Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Surtitles provided by Opera Australia - prepared by Brian FitzGerald.

Percussion provided by Barry Quinn.

With thanks to: Jim Atkins, CVP, Element Rigging, Norwest, Orchestra Victoria, Resolution X.

## CREATIVE TEAM

<b>Conductor</b>	Richard Mills
<b>Director/Lighting Designer</b>	Henning Brockhaus
<b>Assistant Director/Choreographer</b>	Valentina Escobar
<b>Set Designer</b>	Josef Svoboda
<b>Costume Designer</b>	Giancarlo Colis
<b>Set Designer for Adaption</b>	Benito Leonori
<b>Production Manager</b>	Michele Bauer
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Jessica Smithett
<b>Deputy Stage Manager</b>	Andrea Corish
<b>Principal Repetiteur</b>	Phoebe Briggs
<b>Repetiteurs</b>	Phillipa Safey Simon Bruckard

## CAST

<b>Violetta Valéry</b>	Jessica Pratt
<b>Alfredo Germont</b>	Alessandro Scotto di Luzio
<b>Giorgio Germont</b>	José Carbó
<b>Flora Bervoix</b>	Dimity Shepherd
<b>Gastone de Letorières</b>	Carlos E. Bárcenas
<b>Barone Douphol</b>	Nathan Lay
<b>Marchese d'Obigny</b>	Jeremy Kleeman
<b>Dottore Grenvil</b>	Jerzy Kozłowski
<b>Annina</b>	Kirilie Blythman
<b>Giuseppe</b>	Michael Petruccelli
<b>Servant/Commissioner/Messenger</b>	Simon Meadows

<b>Dancers</b>	Adam Bishop Rebecca Blenkinsop Stephanie Blundell Luisa Bomba Georgina Hagerty Dylan Henry Madeleine Magetti Kyle Stevens Jack Traylen
----------------	--

## VICTORIAN OPERA CHORUS

<b>Soprano</b>	Kate Amos Kirilie Blythman Madeleine Featherby Fiona Jopson Margaret Orr Joanna Patocs Cristina Russo Diana Simpson
<b>Mezzo</b>	Margaret Arnold Kerrie Bolton Rebecca Bywater Frederica Cunningham Elizabeth Lewis Emma Muir-Smith Marianne Pierce Anna Plotka
<b>Tenor</b>	Jonathon Bam Paul Biencourt Steven Crosby Michael Edwards Tobias Glaser Trevor Maitland Michael Petruccelli Raphael Wong
<b>Baritone/Bass</b>	Robert Campbell Nicholas Cowall Angus Grant Kristian Gregory Robert Latham Michael Lampard Simon Meadows Matthew Tng

## VICTORIAN OPERA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

<b>Concertmaster</b>	Sarah Curro
<b>Associate Concertmaster</b>	Lorraine Hook
<b>1st Violin</b>	Rebecca Adler Briar Goessi Deborah Goodall Oksana Thompson Jenny Khafagi Kathryn Taylor

<b>2nd Violin</b>	Monica Curro* Mick Loftus-Hills** Aaron Barnden Alyssa Conrau Francesca Hiew Clare Miller Lynette Rayner Kate Sullivan
<b>Viola</b>	Gabrielle Halloran* Christopher Cartlidge** Lauren Brigden Ceridwen Davies Matthew Laing Catherine Turnbull
<b>Cello</b>	Rachel Tobin* Paul Ghica** Anna Pokorny Zoe Wallace
<b>Double Bass</b>	Damien Eckersley* Stephen Newton**
<b>Flute</b>	Sarah Beggs* Taryn Richards
<b>Piccolo</b>	Paula Francis Dom Chaseling
<b>Oboe</b>	Ann Blackburn* Rachel Curkpatrick
<b>Clarinet</b>	Philip Arkinstall* Cameron Smith
<b>Bassoon</b>	Jack Schiller* Chris Martin
<b>French Horn</b>	Geoff Lierse* Kara Hahn Georgia Ioakimidis Rachel Shaw
<b>Trumpet</b>	Shane Hooton* Tristan Rebin
<b>Trombone</b>	Bob Collins* Keiren Conrau
<b>Bass Trombone</b>	Charles MacInnes*
<b>Cimbasso</b>	Jon Woods*
<b>Timpani</b>	Brent Miller*
<b>Percussion</b>	Greg Sully* Evan Pritchard
<b>Harp</b>	Julie Raines

\* Denotes Principal Musician

\*\* Denotes Associate Principal Musician



# SYNOPSIS



## ACT ONE

The courtesan Violetta Valéry hosts a party in her Paris salon, where she is introduced to Alfredo Germont, an admirer. When they are alone, Alfredo confesses his love. At first Violetta protests but then relents and asks him to meet her the following day. After the party, Violetta feels torn between her desire for freedom and love. She chooses freedom and Alfredo can be heard singing outside.

## ACT TWO

Months later they are living in a country house near Paris. Alfredo discovers that Violetta has been selling her possessions to support their lifestyle. He immediately leaves for Paris to procure funds. Violetta receives a party invitation from her friend Flora. In Alfredo's absence, his father Giorgio Germont visits to try to persuade Violetta to end the relationship with his son. She relents and writes Alfredo a farewell letter. Alfredo returns and Violetta declares her love before departing for Paris. She attends the party with Barone Douphol, her new lover. Alfredo arrives and challenges the Barone to a game of cards. Alfredo then accuses Violetta of betrayal. Violetta faints and Germont arrives and denounces his son's behaviour. The Barone challenges Alfredo to a duel.

## ACT THREE

Six months have passed and Violetta is dying. Germont has written to Violetta to inform her that Alfredo was not injured in the duel, and has told Alfredo about her sacrifice for him. Alfredo, discovering the truth, rushes to her bedside. The lovers plan to leave but after a last resurgence of strength Violetta falls dead at her lover's feet.

© Dr Sharon Lierse

# PROGRAM NOTES

## LA TRAVIATA



*La traviata* is Verdi's eighteenth opera and one of his most famous and regularly performed. The period between 1851 and 1853 was particularly productive for Verdi, containing not only *La traviata* but also *Rigoletto* (1851) and *Il Trovatore* (1853).

*La traviata* epitomised great romantic opera with a marriage of the arts - a drama full of passion, glorious song, soaring arias, rousing choruses, extravagant costumes, a large orchestra, and spectacular sets. The title *La traviata* can be translated as 'the lost one', or 'the fallen woman'.

The opera is based on the play *La dame aux Camélias*, adapted from a novel by Alexandre Dumas, fils. Although Verdi conceived the work as contemporary to the 1850s, pressure from the management of the opera house at La Fenice (Venice) ensured that the premiere production was, in fact, set in the 17th century. This, combined with the limitations of the soprano Fanny Salvini-Donatelli (including that she was deemed a little too overweight to credibly play a woman dying of tuberculosis) ensured that the first performance was

deemed a failure. While the end of the first act was met with polite applause, during the second act the audience began to turn against the performance and their boos were now directed towards both the tenor and the baritone as well. Following the premiere, Verdi famously wrote "*La traviata* last night was a failure. Was the fault mine or the singers'? Time will tell".

With a revision of the score and improved casting, the opera was subsequently relaunched in 1854, again in Venice, with further productions in Vienna (1855) and New York and Paris (1856). When it was first performed in London in 1856 it was considered morally questionable. The Church of England tried to put an injunction in place to prevent its performance and Queen Victoria refused to visit the theatre, although it was reported that "the music, words and all, were not unheard at the palace".

From these seasons, *La traviata* gained popularity and became entrenched in the standard operatic repertoire. It is currently listed by Operabase as the most regularly performed opera in the world.

In *La traviata*, Verdi explores the idea of opera as human drama. The libretto (by Francesco Maria Piave) is not only emotionally charged, but is melodramatic; exploring the strongest human emotions; love and grief. These emotions are manifested in the music through expressive melodies, virtuosic vocal writing, rich harmonies, expansive orchestration and the transformation of poetry into drama.

**With thanks to Dr Sharon Lierse for contribution to program notes.**







# BIOGRAPHIES



**RICHARD MILLS**  
Conductor

Richard Mills is one of Australia's most prolific and internationally recognised composers.

He pursues a diverse career as a composer, conductor and artistic director. He has held numerous prestigious posts, and received many scholarships, fellowships and awards including an AM, in 1999. He was Artistic Director of the West Australian Opera 1997 – 2012, Director of the Australian Music Project for the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra 2002 – 2008 and Musica Viva's Composer of the Year in 2008. Richard regularly conducts the leading orchestras and opera companies of Australia and has an extensive discography of orchestral works including his own compositions.



**HENNING BROCKHAUS**  
Director/Lighting Designer

German born Henning Brockhaus has directed major works around the world, including Théâtre de l'Europe in Paris, Piccolo Teatro in Milan, and theatres in Tokyo, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Madrid and now Melbourne. Project highlights include *Attila*, *Otello*, *Elektra*, *La traviata*, *Macbeth* and *Rigoletto* for main stage and festival seasons. An acclaimed director, Henning has also taught in the field of opera and theatre production: first at the University of Venice and later at the Accademia di Belle Arti at Macerata.

In 2004 he founded the "Bottega del Teatro Musicale" at Macerata, an academy for young directors and set designers.



**VALENTINA ESCOBAR**  
Assistant Director/Choreographer

Following musical and theatrical studies, Valentina Escobar has worked in prestigious theatres including Piccolo Teatro (Milan) for Strehler's shows, La Scala Academy, Petruzzelli in Bari, Massimo in Palermo, Verdi in Trieste and Busseto, Pavarotti in Modena, Ravenna, Piacenza, Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini in Jesi, Macerata, the Royal Opera House of Muscat and more as a choreographer, assistant director and director. She has worked with notable artists including Robert Carsen and Henning Brockhaus (*La Serva Padrona*, *Macbeth*, *Rigoletto*, *La traviata* and *Otello*).



**JOSEF SVOBODA (1920-2002)**  
**Set Designer**

Josef Svoboda was born in Cáslav, Czech Republic. He studied scenography at the Prague Conservatory and architecture at the Academy of Applied Arts. He later became the principal designer at the Czech National Theatre in 1948. His multimedia installations, *Lanterna Magika* and *Polyekran*, realized together with director Alfréd Radok for the Expo '58 in Brussels, made him an international name. Svoboda is responsible for introducing modern technologies and materials such as plastics, hydraulics and lasers into his designs. Svoboda's honors and awards include honorary doctorates from the Royal College of Arts in London and awards from the United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT).



**GIANCARLO COLIS**  
**Costume Designer**

Giancarlo Colis was born in Spoleto, where he studied scenography and costume during the Festival dei due Mondi, graduating in stagecraft. Following this he graduated in scenography from the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. Giancarlo has worked in theatre, television and film, including with director Mauro Bolognini and actress, writer and director Franca Valeri. His work for cinema includes *The Mission*, *The Last Emperor*, *The Seventy Scoll*, *Il Conte di Melissa* and *Joe Petrosino* for Rai 1. From 1989 to 1992 he collaborated with Ellen Stewart at La Mama Experimental Theatre Club in New York. Since 2006 Giancarlo has designed costumes for a number of operas directed by Henning Brockhaus.



**BENITO LEONORI**  
**Set Designer for Adaptation**

A graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Macerata, Benito attended the Theatre de l'Europe's biennial for young designers. He has worked with director Henning Brockhaus and designer Josef Svoboda on numerous projects including *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Rigoletto* and *Macbeth* with the likes of Macerata Opera, Opera di Roma, Budapest Opera and Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini, Jesi. Since 2005 Benito has been Technical Director of Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini, and won the Franco Abbiati Critics Award in 2012. Benito opened the last season of *La traviata* at Teatro San Carlo in Naples as scenographer.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## KIRILIE BLYTHMAN

Annina

Kirilie completed a Bachelor of Music at the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne University in 2011. She was awarded the Athenaeum Competition vocal prize and the Walter Kirby Singing Scholarship. Recently a developing artist with Victorian Opera, she completed the Masters of Music (Opera Performance) program through the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne in 2013. For Victorian Opera, Kirilie has performed the roles of Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*) and Princess (*Puss in Boots*) as part of their education program. Other appearances include Soloist (2014 *Opera on a White Night*), Narrator (*The Magic Pudding – the opera*), Soloist (*Rush Hour*), Chorus (*Nixon in China*), Soloist (2013 *Opera on a White Night Gala Concert*).



## CARLOS E. BÁRCENAS

Gastone de Letorières

Carlos was born in Colombia and moved to Australia in 2008, where he completed his Bachelor and Masters in Music (Opera Performance) at the University of Melbourne. With Victorian Opera in 2014, Carlos performed in *Games of Love and Chance* and in 2013, the Judge in *The Magic Pudding – the opera*, the Miller in *Puss in Boots*, as a soloist in *Opera on a White Night*, and understudied Mao in *Nixon in China*. Work with other companies includes Alexander in *Il Re Pastore* for Melbourne Lyric Opera, Don José in *Carmen* for Opera in Good Company, Michael for Deborah Cheetham's new opera *Pecan Summer*, Sigmund & Siegfried for More Than Opera's production of *The Ring - Wagner Animated*.



## JOSÉ CARBÓ

Giorgio Germont

Australian/Argentine baritone José Carbó's international engagements have included the title role in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore* for the Teatro Real in Madrid; his La Scala debut in *Il viaggio a Reims* and his American debut in 2011 as Rossini's Figaro in Seattle. José's album *My Latin Heart* (recorded with Slava & Leonard Grigoryan) reached No. 1 on the *Limelight Magazine* Classical Music charts. In 2014, he sings the title role in *Rigoletto* for Opera Australia, Riolo in *Florencia* for Los Angeles Opera and is soloist with the Adelaide and Canberra Symphony Orchestras.



**JEREMY KLEEMAN**  
**Marchese d'Obigny**

Bass-Baritone Jeremy Kleeman completed a Bachelor of Music at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music in 2011, and in 2013 graduated from Victorian Opera and the Conservatorium's collaborative degree, Master of Music (Opera Performance). For Victorian Opera, Jeremy has performed in *Games of Love and Chance* (2014) and in 2013, as Albert the Pudding in *The Magic Pudding – the opera* and The Ogre in *El Gato con Botas*. He performed Colline in *La bohème* for Opera New England. Jeremy was a prize-winning finalist in the 2013 National Liederfest and the 2012 IFAC Australian Singing Competition, and is generously supported in 2014 by the Joseph Sambrook Opera Scholarship with the Melba Opera Trust.



**JERZY KOZŁOWSKI**  
**Dottore Grenvil**

Jerzy has performed in over sixty operas as soloist and chorus member. Choral music also plays an important part in his career - he is a regular soloist in the Bach Cantata Project at St John's Lutheran Church, Melbourne, and also with the Astra Chamber Music Society. Recent solo appearances include Martin Friedl's *Underworld Songs* and Max Reger's *Hebbel Requiem*. With Victorian Opera he has performed Christ in Bach's *St John Passion*, Trulove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, bass soloist in Stravinsky's *Les Noces* and toured in *Così fan tutte*. Future engagements include Plutone in *Euridice* by Jacopo Peri (1600) at the Woodend Winter Arts Festival.



**NATHAN LAY**  
**Barone Doupol**

Nathan completed his Bachelor of Music at the Melba Conservatorium of Music in 2008, and has since established his career in the Melbourne opera and oratorio scene. In 2014 Nathan performed in *Games of Love and Chance* for Victorian Opera. He recently won the 2013 Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Aria competition, and also received third place in the prestigious Herald Sun Aria competition at Hamer Hall. Nathan performed Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* for Melbourne Opera. He also performed The King in *El Gato con Botas*, Louis the Baker and Billy Webster in *Sunday in the Park with George*, and Bunyip Bluegum in the world premiere of *The Magic Pudding – the Opera* for Victorian Opera.

# BIOGRAPHIES



**SIMON MEADOWS**  
Servant/Commissioner/  
Messenger

VCA graduate Simon Meadows performed the role of Belcore in Donizetti's *L'Elisir D'Amore* with UK company Opera up Close. He also made his German debut singing the Baritone solo in Swiss composer Frank Martin's *In Terra Pax* at Berlin's Heilige Kreuz Kirche. In 2012 he performed the title role in Verdi's *Macbeth* (Kennet Opera, UK), Villequier in Chabrier's *Le Malgre Roi Lui* (Wexford Festival Opera, Ireland), Escamillo in *Carmen* (Opera Up Close, London and Melbourne Opera) and Sonora in Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* (Opera Up Close). He also performed in new works in the NOVA workshop for Victorian Opera.



**MICHAEL PETRUCELLI**  
Giuseppe

Michael Petrucci, a young and passionate classical tenor, completed his Honours in performance at The University of Melbourne in 2012. Michael's performance highlights include: *Games of Love and Chance* (Victorian Opera), Luis in *The Gondoliers*, Richard Dauntless in *Ruddigore*, Kurt in *Laugh out Loud*, the tenor solos for the Mozart *Requiem*, Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* and for Bach Cantata BWV180. Recently, Michael performed in his first public recital series with Elyane Laussade, performed as tenor soloist for *Oratorio de Noël* by Camille Saint-Saëns with the art of sound orchestra and has travelled to Germany and New York where he worked with world leading singing teachers and coaches.



**JESSICA PRATT**  
Violetta Valéry

Jessica Pratt gave her operatic debut in 2007 in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and has established herself ever since as one of the finest and most sought-after interpreters of the bel canto repertoire. Opera companies and festivals she has performed with include La Scala, Covent Garden, Opera Zurich, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Maestranza Seville, La Fenice Venice, San Carlo Naples, the festivals in Pesaro, Garsington, Caramoor New York, Lima, Rome (Caracalla) and Parma (Verdi Festival). Among her many recordings: *La Sonnambula*, *Viva la mamma*, *Adelaide di Borgogna*, *Ciro in Babilonia*, *Otello*, *La sposa di Messina* and the New Year's Gala from Venice.



**ALESSANDRO SCOTTO DI LUZIO**  
**Alfredo Germont**

Alessandro Scotto di Luzio started his musical studies and career at a very young age. His repertoire includes Rodolfo in *La bohème*, Tonio in *La Figlia del Reggimento*, Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Duca di Mantova in *Rigoletto*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Alfredo in *La traviata*, Fenton in *Falstaff*. His recent and future engagements include *Un giorno di regno* and *L'elisir d'amore* in Verona and Florence, *Rigoletto* in Bari, *Don Pasquale* in Glyndebourne and Tel Aviv, *L'elisir d'amore* in Tel Aviv and several concerts with the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation.



**DIMITY SHEPHERD**  
**Flora Bervoix**

Dimity is one of Australia's most established performers. Victorian Opera credits include her Green Room award winning Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Orphée in *Orphée et Eurydice*, Alice in *Through The Looking Glass*, Arsamene in *Xerxes*, Nireno in *Julius Caesar*, her Helpmann Award nominated Lucy in *The Threepenny Opera*, Clara in *Midnight Son*, and appearances in *Nixon in China* and *Sunday in The Park with George*. She has sung Cherubino for Opera Australia, Rosina in *Barber Of Seville* and Carmen for Oz Opera, major roles for Opera Queensland, the title role in *The Ghost Wife* at London's BITE02, Melbourne and Adelaide festivals, and premieres for Chamber Made Opera. Concert performances include Melbourne Symphony and Sydney Festival.



*'Maybe I shouldn't have  
stolen from the giant'*

# INTO THE WOODS

19-26 July 2014

Be careful what you wish for...

BOOK NOW

Arts Centre Melbourne

Tickets from \$50

\$30 tickets for 30 years & under

1300 182 183 (fees apply)

[victorianopera.com.au](http://victorianopera.com.au)



*'Maybe I shouldn't have  
strayed from the path'*



Victorian  
Opera

*'I'll never, never  
be happy'*



*'Remorse will get  
you nowhere'*

*'Maybe I shouldn't have  
attended the ball'*



Into the Woods  
Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Book by James Lapine  
Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine  
By arrangement with Hal Leonard Australia Pty Ltd  
Exclusive agent for Music Theatre International (NY)



Victorian  
Opera

# THE MAESTRO AND THE COOK

An exclusive fundraising event

Join celebrity cook Stefano de Pieri and Victorian Opera's Artistic Director Richard Mills for an unforgettable evening of beautiful cuisine, breathtaking opera and good company.

**FRIDAY 20 JUNE 2014**

Held in the home of Richard Mills, this intimate dinner has only 14 places available, subject to donation.

## ENQUIRIES

Jo De Jong  
Development & Corporate Partnerships Manager  
0408 105 655 or [jo@victorianopera.com.au](mailto:jo@victorianopera.com.au)



# CONNECT WITH US



## EXPLORE THE WORLD OF OPERA

Immerse yourself in the world of *La traviata*, watch the timelapse capturing the intricate details of the beautiful staging, read about Josef Svoboda the designer behind the 'Traviata of the Mirrors', see behind-the-scene pictures, download the programme, read reviews and more!

## JOIN IN OUR CONVERSATION



[victorianopera.com.au](http://victorianopera.com.au)



[victorianopera.com.au/blog](http://victorianopera.com.au/blog)



[facebook.com/vopera](https://facebook.com/vopera)



[twitter.com/victorianopera](https://twitter.com/victorianopera)



[instagram.com/victorianopera](https://instagram.com/victorianopera)

 [youtube.com/victorianoperapage](https://youtube.com/victorianoperapage)

## STAY IN THE LOOP

Keep up to date with our upcoming events, activities and special offers. Sign up to our e-news and mailing list [victorianopera.com.au/contact](http://victorianopera.com.au/contact)



## READ OUR BEHIND THE CURTAIN BLOG

Artistic Director Richard Mills caught up with Jessica Pratt in Milan to talk about what attracted her to opera and her thoughts on playing Violetta in *La traviata*. Baritone Nathan Lay shares a visual blog about his experience studying with Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini ahead of his performance as Barone Douphol.

Credit: Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini

## Victorian Opera support green printing initiatives



This programme has been printed using vegetable based inks with alcohol free printing initiatives on 100% recycled carbon neutral paper by Printgraphics under ISO 14001 Environmental certification.

# VICTORIAN OPERA PATRONS



## FOUNDING PATRONS

The Late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE  
Lady Potter AC

## PATRON IN CHIEF

The Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC,  
Governor of Victoria

## VICTORIAN YOUTH OPERA PATRON

Betty Amsden OAM

## LIVING BEQUEST

Susan Harley

## ARTISTIC DIRECTORS CIRCLE (\$10,000+)

Jennifer Brukner  
William J Forrest AM  
John & Diana Frew  
Richard & Isabella Green  
Mrs Jane Hemstrich  
Hans & Petra Henkell  
Peter & Anne Laver  
Deanne Bevan & Guy Russo  
Lady Southey AC  
Anonymous (1)

## EDUCATION SYNDICATE

Betty Amsden OAM  
Hans & Petra Henkell

## NEW WORK SYNDICATE

Beth Brown & Tom Bruce AM  
Marian & Ken Scarlett OAM  
Joy Selby Smith  
Felicity Teague

## DIAMOND PATRONS (\$10,000+)

Betty Amsden OAM  
The Late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE

## PLATINUM PATRONS (\$5,000+)

Neilma Gantner  
Paul Little AO & Jane Hansen  
Dr John & Elizabeth Wright-Smith  
Anonymous (1)

## GOLD PATRONS (\$2,500+)

Bruce Curl  
Craig D'Alton & Peter Sherlock  
Dr Gavan Griffith AO QC  
Sue Kirkham  
Judith Rodriguez  
John & Elisabeth Schiller  
Gregory Shalit & Miriam Faine  
Tim & Lynne Sherwood  
Felicity Teague  
Anonymous (1)

## SILVER PATRONS (\$1,000+)

Joanna Baeviski  
Laurie Bebbington & Elizabeth O'Keeffe  
Professor Simon Bell & Dr Jennifer Coghlan-Bell  
Kirsty Bennet  
Sheila Bignell  
Beth Brown & Tom Bruce AM  
Buckett Family  
Terry & Christine Campbell  
Lynda Campbell  
Jim & Diana Carlton  
Caroline & Robert Clemente  
Mary Davidson & Frederick Davidson AM  
Stephanie Dundas  
Gareth & Merran Evans  
Rosemary Forbes & Ian Hocking  
Greig Gailey & Geraldine Lazarus  
Bob Garlick

*If you would like to get more involved in the work of Victorian Opera through our individual giving program please contact Catrionadh Dobson, Individual Giving Manager on 03 9001 6405 or [catrionadhd@victorianopera.com.au](mailto:catrionadhd@victorianopera.com.au).*



John & Gaye Gaylard  
Brian Goddard  
Anthony Grigg & Paul Williamson  
Stuart & Sue Hamilton  
Geoff & Anthea Hone  
Stewart & Denise Jackel  
Simon L Jackson & Brian Warburton  
Stuart T Jennings  
Kemp Family  
Ian Kennedy AM & Dr Sandra Hacker AO  
John & Lynne Landy  
Kwong & Joanne Lee Dow  
Joan & George Lefroy  
Anne Lierse  
Professor John Lovering AO & Ms Kerry Lovering OAM  
Kaye E Marion  
Margaret Mayers & Marie Dowling  
Duncan & Lorraine McGregor  
Dr Ken & Mrs Lesley Muirden  
Ruth & Tom O'Dea  
Jane Patrick & Robert Evans  
Dimity Reed  
Sam Ricketson & Rosemary Ayton  
Michael Rigg  
Elżbieta & Tomasz Romanowski  
Michael Sassella  
Schapper Family Foundation  
Aubrey G Schrader  
Phillip & Sue Schudmak  
Bernadette Slater  
Liz & Peter Turner  
Catherine Walter AM  
Andrea Walton  
Earl & Countess of Wilton  
Anonymous (4)

#### **BRONZE PATRONS (\$500+)**

John & Nancy Bomford  
Jasmine Brunner  
Neil Burns  
Pam Caldwell  
Ms Corrie Calegari & Mr Ian Law  
Deloitte  
Catrionadh Dobson & Charles Windeyer  
Jean Dunn  
Dennis Freeman  
Nance Grant AM MBE  
Lesley Griffin  
Jill & Robert Grogan  
April Hamer  
Angela Kayser  
Irene Kearsey  
David & Barbara McSkimming  
Douglas & Rosemary Meagher  
Ann Miller  
Kenneth W Park  
Lynette Payne  
John Rickard  
Judith Robinson  
Mary Ryan  
Joseph Sambrook & Mary-Jane Gething  
John & Thea Scott  
Mr Sam & Mrs Minnie Smorgon  
Liz & Hugh Taylor  
Neil Twist  
Caroline Vaillant  
Robyn Walton  
Russell Waters & Marissa Barter-Waters  
Ian A Watts  
Anonymous (7)

---

In 1937, the people of Mildura got their kicks going to the flicks at the Astor Theatre on Langtree Avenue. Today, the building is home to the Mildura Brewery, owned and operated by local couple Stefano de Pieri and Donata Carrazza.

We created this beer in honour of its history. It exhibits all the finest points of a classic new world pale ale: clean, biscuity malt characters overlaid with exotic fruit flavours and aromas derived from Australian-grown Galaxy hops.

---

Available at BWS  
and Dan Murphy's  
nationally



[mildurabrewery.com.au](http://mildurabrewery.com.au)

Proud  
Product  
Partner



Victorian  
Opera

# VICTORIAN OPERA STAFF



## CONDUCTOR EMERITUS

Richard Gill OAM

## VICTORIAN OPERA BOARD

Jane Hemstrich (Chairman)

Greig Gailey (Deputy Chairman)

Francis Ebury, Earl of Wilton

Ross Freeman

Anne Gilby

The Hon. Professor Barry Jones, AO

Penny Stragalinos

Catherine Walter AM

## EXECUTIVE

### Artistic Director

Dr Richard Mills AM

### Managing Director

Andrew Snell

### Executive Producer

Libby Hill

## ARTISTIC AND EDUCATION

### Head of Music

Phoebe Briggs

### Repetiteur

Phillipa Safey

### Education & Community Engagement Manager

Melissa Stark

### Artistic Administration Coordinator

Kate Stephens

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

### Finance & HR Manager

Darren O'Beirne

### Finance Assistant

Claire Voumard

### Office Administrator

Kate Bailey

## DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

### Development & Corporate Partnerships Manager

Jo De Jong

### Business Development Manager

Melissa Grenville

### Individual Giving Manager

Catrionadh Dobson

### Philanthropy Executive

Caroline Buckley

### Development & Marketing Coordinator

Nichole O'Duffy

### Marketing & Communications Manager

Kanesan Nathan

### Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Lisa Wallace

### Media Relations Executive

Rohan Astley

## PRODUCTION

### Production Manager

Michele Bauer

### Technical & Operations Coordinator

Peter Darby

### Costume Supervisor

Ross Hall

## VICTORIAN OPERA 2014 SEASON STAFF

### Head Mechanist

Adam Graf

### Women's Tailor

Alice Swing

### Men's Tailor

Maruska Blyszczak

### Costumier

Madeleine Somers

### Wardrobe Coordinator

Jane Jericho

### Wigs

Linda Cowell

### Orchestral Management

Luke Hale

Cameron Lukey

# Our Partners



Victorian Opera is supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria. Victorian Opera would also like to acknowledge, with great appreciation, the contribution of the partners listed on this page.

---

## Government Partners



---

### Foundation Partner



### Discover Opera Across Victoria Partner



### University Partner



### Regional Partner



---

## Supporting Partners



---

## Education & Access Partners



Collier Charitable Fund



Sylvia Fisher Foundation

William Angliss Charitable Fund



---

## Performance Partners



---

Victorian Opera creates tailored partnerships to enable businesses to meet their strategic priorities. Partnerships are available at various levels and activity is adapted to align with each company's objectives. For a discussion about how your business can benefit from a partnership with Victorian Opera, please contact Jo De Jong, Development & Corporate Partnerships Manager on (03) 9001 6408 or [jo@victorianopera.com.au](mailto:jo@victorianopera.com.au).

VICTORIAN OPERA / Season Partners

**SOFITEL MELBOURNE ON COLLINS**

LOCATED AT THE PARIS END OF COLLINS STREET  
FEATURING LUXURIOUS ROOMS OFFERING PANORAMIC  
VIEWS AND CONTEMPORARY DECOR.  
25 COLLINS STREET - MELBOURNE VIC 3000 - AUSTRALIA  
TEL: +61 3 9653 0000 - [SOFITEL-MELBOURNE.COM](http://SOFITEL-MELBOURNE.COM)

MY MAGNIFIQUE VOYAGE



*Sofitel Melbourne*

*Life is Magnifique in Melbourne!*



*The Arrival*



*Superior King*



**SOFITEL**  
LUXURY HOTELS

**DISCOVER LUXURY AT THE PARIS END OF COLLINS STREET.**

BOOK A FANTASTIC NIGHT AT ONE OF THE MOST LUXURIOUS HOTELS IN ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST EXCITING CITIES. KNOWN AS MELBOURNE'S HOTEL FOR THE ARTS, SOFITEL MELBOURNE ON COLLINS IS A PROUD SPONSOR OF VICTORIAN OPERA. DISCOVER MORE AT [WWW.SOFITEL-MELBOURNE.COM](http://WWW.SOFITEL-MELBOURNE.COM) OR [WWW.SOFITEL.COM](http://WWW.SOFITEL.COM)





## A HAPPY, FULFILLED LIFE FOR VIOLETTA IN 2014?

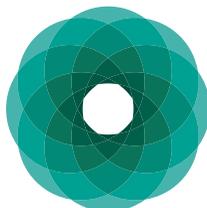
*Imagine how different  
Violetta's life might have  
been had she lived in the  
21st century – teacher,  
business owner, doctor,  
company director, lawyer...*

With virtually unlimited lifestyle and career choices, healthcare and, significantly, access to career mentoring, she would have been a professional of an utterly different kind.

Many women struggle with the intensity of demanding careers and family commitments leaving precious little time or energy for very much else.

Career Eye specialises in helping professional women articulate and prioritise their career aspirations and balance complex, demanding lifestyles so they can flourish in every sense.

*Your options have suddenly  
been reinvented. Connect  
with us at [careereye.com.au](http://careereye.com.au)*



**CAREER EYE**

ASPIRE . BALANCE . FLOURISH

Career mentoring for professional women . [careereye.com.au](http://careereye.com.au)