

**Media Release**

4 May 2020



**Opera Australia launches free online streaming platform with Joan Sutherland in the starring role**

Unable to perform live while the country is in COVID-19 lock-down, Opera Australia has created another way to share their performances with opera fans, today launching **OA | TV: Opera Australia on Demand**, a free online streaming service.

OA | TV will feature exclusive content from its back catalogue that includes the world’s most comprehensive collection of Dame Joan Sutherland performances on video and Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, plus a series of chat show style interviews called In Conversation with Lyndon Terracini and unique ‘behind the scenes’ footage.

Each week OA will add new content to the platform. The launch will feature one of Dame Joan Sutherland’s most celebrated performances, that of Hannah Glawari in the 1988 production of Franz Lehar’s *The Merry Widow*, performed at the Sydney Opera House, directed by Lofti Mansouri and conducted by Richard Bonyngue. Also available on the platform from today, the full length production of Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour’s inaugural 2012 season of *La Traviata*, that was due to be revived in 2020 before being cancelled due to the coronavirus.

The first instalment of the In Conversation with Lyndon Terracini series with OA’s Concert Master Jun Yi Ma, reveals his fascinating journey from being handpicked for specialist coaching at age five in China, performing for President Reagan at the White House aged 12 years, to landing the role of Concert Master for the Tasmanian Symphony before being enticed to join OA by Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini.

Opera Australia is renowned for defying international trends of declining audience numbers and is constantly evolving its programming in an endeavour to broaden its audience but the coronavirus was not part of the plan says Mr Terracini.

“Understandably it’s been devastating for everyone at the Company not being able to perform through this crisis, and we know our fans are missing us as much as we’re missing being on stage.

“We’ve actually been wanting to launch OA | TV for some time, and now we have the right digital platform and the time to develop it, so we can share not only our rich history with our fans, but also it’s an opportunity for them to meet some of our incredibly talented artists as well as some of the key people working behind the scenes, with a series of interviews we’re going to do.

“OA has an extensive archive of legendary operatic performances. We’ve got the largest collection of Joan Sutherland videos in the world, and it’s such a great honour to be able to share these gems with her fans,” he said.

OA | TV will launch with four program categories; In Conversation with Lyndon Terracini, Opera in the Sydney Opera House, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour and The Best of Dame Joan Sutherland, a collection of her

Image credits: The Merry Widow (1988): William Moseley/Opera Australia archives/ Lucia di Lammermoor (1980): Branco Gaica/Opera Australia archives

most famous arias that transformed her into Australia's most loved opera singer and a world-wide operatic sensation. **tv.opera.org.au**

**Note: OA | TV will not be live until midnight Sunday 3 May 2020**

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