



**WEST
AUSTRALIAN
OPERA
2026**

ROMÉO ET JULIETTE



Roméo et Juliette

West Australian Opera

A co-production between West Australian Opera,
State Opera South Australia, and Irish National Opera

15 - 24 October 2026, His Majesty's Theatre, Perth

Composer Charles Gounod

Librettists Jules Barbier, Michael Carré

Conductor Christopher van Tuinen

Director Rodula Gaitanou

Set & Costume Designer takis

Lighting Designer Bernie Tan-Hayes

Assistant Director Anna Tsirigotis

Fight Director Nastassja Norwood

Original Chorus Choreography (Capulet Ball) Jo Stone

Repetiteur Tommaso Pollio

Roméo Alasdair Kent

Juliette Samantha Clarke

Mercutio Benjamin Del Borrello

Friar Laurent Andrew Foote

Count Capulet Christopher Hillier

Tybalt Kohsei Gilkes

Stéphano Ruth Burke

Gertrude Fiona Campbell

The Duke Jake Bigwood

Paris Devon Lake

Gregorio David Valsamidis

Benvolio Vin Trikeriotis

Young Roméo Oliver O'Toole

Young Juliette Isla Graham

West Australian Opera Chorus

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Production Manager Mandy Farmer

Stage Manager Karen Farmer

Assistant Stage Managers Rebecca Dilley, Claire Mayers

Head of Wardrobe Nora Stelter

Deputy Head of Wardrobe Rose o' Sharon Finlay

Wardrobe Assistant Tricia David

Dressers Laura Hill, Holly Sansalone, Miranda Weinert, V. Wylie

Head of Makeup Sharon Kyrwood

Head of Wigs Virginia Vona

Wig Assistants Christopher Lyons, Delia Stanley

Senior Technician Aidan Massie-Taylor

Surtitle Operator Allison Fyfe

Child Chaperone Fiona Hull

Original Chorus Choreography (Capulet Ball) Jo Stone

Language Coach Helen Brown

Set construction Form Imagination

West Australian Opera acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. Kalyakoorl, ngalak warangka (forever we sing).



THE HONOURABLE CHRIS DAWSON AC APM

Vice Regal Patron's Message

As Vice-Regal Patron of West Australian Opera, I am proud to welcome you to this season of *Roméo et Juliette*.

The state opera company maintains a strong connection to the people of Western Australia. Through its commitment to education, the commissioning and development of indigenous works, and performances across our vast state, West Australian Opera enables people from all ages, regions and backgrounds to access the artform of opera.

West Australian Opera continues to enrich the performing arts in the State alongside the state orchestra, the West Australian Symphony Orchestra whom I acknowledge and thank as performance partner for opera seasons.

To celebrate its 60th year in 2027, West Australian Opera has announced a diverse and dramatic program worthy of this historic milestone.

“West Australian Opera continues to enrich the performing arts in the State.”



CAROLYN CHARD AM

Executive Director's Message

West Australian Opera is proud to present *Roméo et Juliette* in the beautiful His Majesty's Theatre, on the lands of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. Kalyakoorl, ngalak warangka (forever we sing).

This production is directed by Rodula Gaitanou, designed by takis with lighting designed by Bernie Tan-Hayes.

I am grateful to the creative team who designed the production and to the singers and musicians who have brought it all to life. Thank you to Conductor Chris van Tuinen with the West Australian Opera Chorus and West Australian Symphony Orchestra, to repetiteur Tommaso Pollio, to stage management, crew, and backstage teams.

Thank you to the cast Alasdair Kent (Roméo) Samantha Clarke (Juliette), Benjamin Del Borello (Mercutio), Andrew Foote (Friar Laurent), Christopher Hillier (Count Capulet), Kohsei Gilkes (Tybalt), Ruth Burke (Stephano), Fiona (Gertrude), Jake Bigwood (The Duke).

At West Australian Opera, our dream is to speak to the heart through the human voice and to unite people through the joy of music. The excitement of taking your seat for a performance, the anticipation of the curtain rising, and the drama that is set to unfold on stage make live performances such a special experience. We are proud to be your state opera company. Thank you for being here with us and please book your tickets for the 60th anniversary season in 2027.



DARREN LEWSEN

Chair's Message

West Australian Opera extends gratitude to the Federal Government, through Creative Australia, the WA Government, and Lotterywest.

We appreciate and acknowledge the generosity of valued Principal Partner, Wesfarmers Arts. We thank partners Healthway, MM Electrical, Feilman Foundation JC Decaux and the City of Perth.

We recognise the significant contribution of the Wesfarmers Arts Young Artists Program, the Roberts Emerging Artist and Bendat Scholarships which play important roles in the development of talent in Western Australia.

Thank you to our valued sponsors, partners, patrons, trusts, foundations, donors, and funders. On behalf of the Board and management team, we express our deep appreciation to you, our opera family – the supporters and audience members who continue to enjoy and support the power of music and the artistic vibrancy of Western Australia.

West Australian Opera celebrates 60 years as your state opera company in 2027. Your contributions ensure that the state opera company will continue to share the magic that is music, through opera and the power of the human voice well into the future.

“Thank you to all sponsors, partners, patrons, trusts, foundations, donors, and government funders.”



CHRISTOPHER VAN TUINEN

Conductor's Notes

The attraction of Shakespeare for opera composers is well established and understandable. Great poetic writing, dramatic plots and characters, well known titles already in the public eye, and a collaboration with a long dead playwright.

After the success of his opera *Faust* in 1859, Gounod was commissioned by the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris to write another opera, choosing this time *Roméo et Juliette* which premiered in 1867.

Staying true to the plot and structure of the play, Gounod crafted a romantic and powerful score, centred on four duets for the leads, a now very famous waltz, and with choruses and ensembles to drive the drama and elaborate the scenes.

Written two years after the premiere of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (and the French revision and premiere of Verdi's *Macbeth*) the music is powerfully of its time.

We are still ten years before Bizet's *Carmen* and Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*, so for me *Roméo et Juliette* leans more towards Germanic romanticism and Verdian forms than what we could consider to be exploratory, fanciful, unusual, or impressionistic.

Because of this, we have two of the most demanding roles in the entire repertoire, the four duets, solos and fight scenes create a test of endurance for even the most powerful and confident of singers, requiring beauty and control, effortless top notes and colours throughout the whole score with very little chance to rest between peaks of glorious singing. And outside our lovers we have equally demanding work for the principals and chorus, great arias for baritones and mezzos, ensembles of subtlety and variation.

Great storytelling, powerful music and singing at the highest levels, full of colour and variation. Exactly what good opera should be. I hope you enjoy this season of *Roméo et Juliette*.



RODULA GAITANOU

Director's Notes

Every time I return to *Roméo et Juliette*, I am struck by a work suspended between opposites: love and hate, intimacy and public life, earth and sky, light and darkness. In this production, that tension begins with a world governed by appearances: a society in which identity is performed, behaviour is codified and private feeling is constantly exposed to the public gaze.

Gounod distils Shakespeare's drama through music. Moments that strike like a blade in the play are allowed to expand; time stretches, and we inhabit the lovers' exhilaration, hesitation and fear. The four great duets trace their entire journey: from the shock of recognition, through the balcony's declaration and the intimacy of their wedding night, to their final encounter in the tomb. With each meeting, the surrounding world recedes and the space between them becomes more complete, until two separate voices seem to become one.

The masked ball makes this visible from the beginning: everyone disguises, flirts and performs. Roméo and Juliette meet within that artifice, but what passes between them is startlingly direct. Their love becomes an act of authenticity in a world of appearances.

This is the journey we have tried to make visible: two young people progressively carving out a space of their own, while the world around them continues to close in. The balcony, suspended above that world, offers its purest expression — a place where, briefly, its rules no longer apply.

Their deaths are tragic, but their love is not defeated. Through their love, they have become something neither could have become alone. And perhaps the final transformation belongs to us: we witness what becomes possible when two people risk everything to meet each other without disguise. Four centuries later, that possibility remains as radical as ever.

Synopsis

ACT

I

In Verona, Count Capulet hosts a grand ball to celebrate his daughter Juliette's coming of age and to introduce her to Count Paris, her intended suitor. Among the guests—uninvited and in disguise—are Roméo, a Montague, and his friends Mercutio and Benvolio. The Montagues and Capulets are sworn enemies, but Roméo is drawn to the celebration by a strange sense of fate. At the ball, Juliette confides in her nurse Gertrude that she's not ready for marriage and longs for freedom. When Roméo sees her, he is instantly captivated. They speak briefly, unaware of each other's identities, and fall in love. Tybalt, Juliette's fiery cousin, recognises Roméo and is enraged, but Count Capulet insists on keeping the peace—for now.

ACT

II

Later that night, Roméo sneaks into the Capulet garden and overhears Juliette expressing her love for him, despite the feud between their families. He reveals himself and they share a passionate exchange, vowing to marry in secret. Their moment is interrupted by Capulet servants, including the brash Gregorio, searching for intruders. Roméo's page, Stéphano, narrowly avoids capture. As dawn approaches, Roméo and Juliette part with a promise to wed.

ACT

III

Roméo turns to Friar Laurent, a wise and compassionate friar, who agrees to marry the young lovers in secret, hoping their union might end the feud. Juliette arrives, and the two are wed.

Meanwhile, tensions erupt in the streets. Stéphano sings a mocking tune outside the Capulet home, provoking a fight with Gregorio and other Capulet servants. Mercutio joins the fray, and when Tybalt arrives, he challenges Mercutio to a duel. Roméo tries to keep the peace, but Mercutio is fatally wounded. In a fit of grief and rage, Roméo kills Tybalt. The Duke of Verona arrives and, seeing the bloodshed, banishes Roméo from the city.

ACT

IV

Roméo and Juliette spend one final night together before he must flee. Though devastated, Juliette forgives him for Tybalt's death, knowing it was in self-defence. As Roméo departs, Count Capulet announces that Juliette will marry Paris that very day, honouring Tybalt's dying wish. Juliette turns to Friar Laurent for help. He devises a daring plan: she will take a potion that mimics death. Once she is laid to rest in the Capulet tomb, Roméo will come to rescue her, and they can escape together. Juliette bravely drinks the potion.

ACT

V

Friar Laurent sends a message to Roméo explaining the plan, but it never arrives as Friar Jean, the messenger, is delayed. Roméo hears only that Juliette is dead. Heartbroken, he returns to Verona and enters the Capulet tomb. Believing Juliette truly gone, he takes poison. Moments later, Juliette awakens. They share a brief, joyful reunion before Roméo reveals what he has done. As he dies, Juliette finds no poison left and takes her own life with a dagger. In their final moments, they pray for forgiveness and peace—a tragic end to a love that dared to defy hatred.



CONDUCTOR

Christopher van Tuinen

Christopher graduated with a B-Mus from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2001. In 2005 he completed a Masters in Conducting at the VCA. He also holds a B.A. from the University of Queensland, an LLB from Q.U.T. and an AMusA from the AMEB. He won the Best Conductor category in the WA Performing Arts Awards and has been nominated by the Musical Theatre Guild and Green Room Awards in the 'Best Conductor' category.

During 2008 and 2009 he was a member of the Young Artists Program with Opera Australia. In 2007 Chris was appointed as the inaugural Conducting Fellowship at the Australian Ballet. He has worked with the WASO, Orchestra Victoria, AOBO and the QSO. Previous roles include Perth Festival, WASO, Musica Viva and Lost and Found Opera.

Previous opera credits include, *Rusalka*, *Dido & Aeneas*, *Otello*, *La bohème*, *La traviata*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Cav/Pag*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Iolanta*, *Elijah*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Hansel und Gretel*, *Don Procopio*, *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, *Medeé*, *La voix Humaine* amongst others. He has recorded and been broadcast by the ABC.

Chris is currently the Artistic Director of West Australian Opera.



DIRECTOR

Rodula Gaitanou

Rodula Gaitanou is an Athens-born, Paris-trained, London-based opera director working internationally across Europe, Australia and the United States. Her work is defined by its psychological rigour and strong visual dramaturgy, creating productions that are both musically exacting and theatrically immediate.

Recent highlights include a new production of *La forza del destino* at the Greek National Opera, nominated for Best Production at the 2025 International Opera Awards, alongside *La bohème* at Malmö Opera. She made her US debut with *Carmen* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and has directed *Vanessa* for the Spoleto Festival and Wexford Festival Opera. Upcoming projects include *Death in Venice* at Teatro Grande in Brescia, *Capriccio* at Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège and *Andrea Chénier* at Savonlinna.

Gaitanou was nominated for Best Director at the International Opera Awards in 2019 and is a recipient of the ARGO Award for services to Arts and Culture presented to exceptional members of the Hellenic Diaspora. She trained in Paris at La Sorbonne, at Université Paris 8 and at the International Theatre School Jacques Lecoq following initial studies as a violinist in Athens. She is an alumna of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.





LIGHTING DESIGNER

**Bernie
Tan-Hayes**

Bernie has had a long and distinguished career in Theatre Lighting, Architectural Lighting and Audio Visual Design. He resides in Yeppoon Queensland and has projects running across the Globe. Theatre, Musical and Opera CREDITS:

Opera Australia: *Anastasia (Australian Associate) Opera In the Bowl, Meet in Beijing Festival and the Yarrabah Community Opera*. State Opera of South Australia: *Into the Woods, Hansel and Gretel, Cosi Fan Tutte*. Opera Queensland: *Cosi Fan Tutti, The Marriage of Figaro, The Human Voice, The Call, Festival of Outback Opera* Some other credits for both theatre and Opera. Pinch Gut Opera: *Semele, The Fairy Queen, Orfeo, Dardenus, Idomeneo, Juditha Triumphans, David and Jonathan, Lormindo and Orpheus + Eurydice*. New Zealand Opera: *La Boheme and Eugene Onegin*. Queensland Theatre, Vietgone, Tiny Beautiful Things, God of Carnage. Brisbane Festival: *Miracle in Brisbane*. Sydney Theatre Company: *Travesties, Macbeth*. Queensland Music Festival: *Bob Cats Dancing, Charters Towers the Musical*. Erth Visual and Physical; *Gondwana, Nargen and the Stars*. GWB Entertainment: *Lord of the Rings A Musical Journey (Australian Associate)*.

Beyond his theatre Credits Bernie is the CEO of FPOV an international lighting and Audio Visual Company. He is also the Chair of the international Certified Lighting Designer credential and a professional member of the International Association of Lighting Designers.



SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER

takis

takis, Greek in origin and based in London, is a cross-disciplinary performance designer working in opera, theatre, ballet, circus, and fashion.

He trained across Europe at the Fine Arts Academy of Bucharest, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London College of Fashion and Aalto University, Helsinki, where he was awarded and published his PhD. He developed the Meta-Suit, an interchangeable costume exploring fluid expressions of masculinity in everyday life.

His work has also been presented across five continents, including major West End productions, leading international opera houses, non-replica musicals across Scandinavia, the world's first 3D-projection ballet and long-running circus residencies in Las Vegas and Atlantic City. Exhibitions include the Victoria & Albert Museum in London and Design Museum Helsinki.

He has received over twenty major international award nominations, including multiple Laurence Olivier Award nominations. In 2025, he was a Designer of the Year finalist at the International Opera Awards.



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Anna Tsirigotis

Anna graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) with a Bachelor of Arts (Musical Theatre) in 2006. At 16, she made her professional debut at Radio City Music Hall New York, in Dein Perry's *Steel City*. Professional credits include the Australian and New Zealand tour of *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia), *Irene* starring Debbie Reynolds (Peach Productions), *The Boy from Oz* (Arena Tour), *Putting it Together* (Riverside Theatre) and *Oklahoma* (IAJ International). Other highlights include performing in the 100th anniversary of His Majesty's Theatre and the opening of the Heath Ledger Theatre.

Roles include: Carol in *Shakers*, Lorraine in *Bat Boy*, Gladys in *Pal Joey* and The School Teacher in the Australian premiere of William Finn's *Elegies*. Anna has worked as a choreographer throughout Germany for the Stage School Hamburg, and on productions of *Blood Brothers*, *Guys and Dolls* and *42nd Street*. For State Opera South Australia Anna has been the choreographer for *Madama Butterfly* and *HMS Pinafore*, and revival choreographer for *The Pirates of Penzance* (State Opera South Australia, West Australian Opera and Victorian Opera). In 2027, Anna returns to Victorian Opera as choreographer for *Iolanthe*.



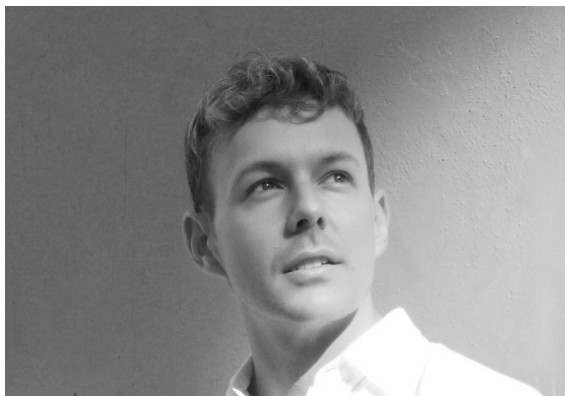
FIGHT DIRECTOR

Nastassja Norwood

Nastassja Norwood is the owner of Stage Combat Perth, holding accreditation from the Society of Australian Fight Directors Inc.

Recent credits include *Carmen* (2023) and *Tosca* (2022) with WA Opera; *The Almighty Sometimes* (2026), *Never Have I Ever* (2025), *Things I Know To Be True* (2023), *City of Gold* (2022), *York* (2021), and *Oklahoma!* (2020) with Black Swan Theatre Company, as well as *Romeo and Juliet* (2024) with WA Ballet.

Nastassja graduated from WAAPA in 2013, with a Bachelor of Contemporary Arts in Contemporary Performance and Theatre Studies.



ROMÉO

Alasdair Kent

Alasdair Kent is a Perth-born, internationally acclaimed high tenor, principally known for his work in Mozart and Rossini, and in French Baroque and Romantic music. He has recently appeared at the Opéra national de Paris, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Wiener Staatsoper, Teatro Real Madrid, Teatro alla Scala, Teatro San Carlo di Napoli, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Bayerische Staatsoper, Opernhaus Zürich, Rossini Opera Festival and Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Alasdair's repertoire features leading roles in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Cenerentola*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Il turco in Italia*, *Semiramide*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *I puritani*, *Don Pasquale*, *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and *Iphigénie en Tauride*. In concert, his repertoire ranges from Bach and Rossini to Orff and Britten.

His recordings include Traetta's *Ifigenia in Tauride* with Christophe Rousset and Les Talens Lyriques, Britten's *Symphonic Suite from Gloriana* with Ivor Bolton and Sinfonieorchester Basel, and *L'italiana in Algeri*, recorded live at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam. He has won numerous prizes, among them the Marten Bequest and the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngé Foundation Bel Canto Award.



JULIETTE

Samantha Clarke

Samantha's 2026/27 season includes returns to West Australian Opera for her role debut as Juliette *Roméo et Juliette*, and to Opera Australia as Mimi *La bohème* and Liù *Turandot*. She joins Sydney Symphony Orchestra for Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mozart's *Requiem* and Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* as Woglinde. Samantha also performs with the London Philharmonic Orchestra for *Das Paradies und die Peri*, and with West Australian Symphony Orchestra and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for Handel's *Messiah*.

Recent engagements include Euridice *Orfeo ed Euridice* with Opera Australia; Fiordiligi *Così fan tutte* for the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy in Japan, Grange Festival and Opera Queensland; Countess *Le nozze di Figaro* at Garsington; Cleopatra *Giulio Cesare* and Theodora for *Pinchgut* Opera; Woglinde *Das Rheingold*, Marzelline *Fidelio*, Waldvogel *Siegfried* and Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* with Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and Violetta *La traviata* with Grange Festival, Opera Australia and West Australian Opera.

A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Samantha's numerous awards include the 2019 Guildhall Gold Medal and the Leverhulme Royal Northern College of Music Award.



MERCUTIO

Benjamin Del Borrello

West Australian baritone Benjamin Del Borrello holds a Bachelor of Music (Classical Vocal: Performance) from The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). He was part of the West Australian Opera Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist Program in 2024/25.

In 2026, Benjamin will be making two debuts with West Australian Opera as the Marquis d'Obigny: *La Traviata* and Mercutio: *Roméo et Juliette*, as well as Masetto: *Don Giovanni* in the Opera Australia National Tour. Recent career highlights include: Marcello: *La Bohème* (Opera Australia National Tour 2024 and 2025) and Baritone Soloist: *Beethoven's 9th Symphony* (Darwin Symphony Orchestra). Benjamin had his Austrian debut in January 2025 in a concert performance with Stimme, Leib und Seele. Other roles include Il Conte Almaviva: *The Marriage of Figaro (Secret Opera)* (WAO); Figaro: *Rapunzel (Il barbiere di Siviglia)* (FFO); Quinault: *Adriana Lecouvreur* (FFO); Apollo/Somnus: *Semele* (HIP Company); Peter: *Hansel and Gretel* (WAAPA). Benjamin has also been a semi-finalist in the IFAC HANDA Australian Singing Competition 2023 and was awarded the Rogers and Thick Award for 2023 through Freeze Frame Opera.

Roberts Emerging Artist



FRIAR LAURENT

Andrew Foote

Andrew first performed for West Australian Opera in the 1988 production of *Eureka Stockade*. For over 40 years he has been a regular guest artist for Western Australian arts companies, a national broadcast artist, a freelance opera principal, a regular recitalist and oratorio soloist, a musical director, an opera director, and an award-winning tertiary educator. He has performed more than 30 operatic roles throughout Australia for Opera Australia, OzOpera and West Australian Opera, and won the Helpmann Award for best supporting male singer in an opera for his acclaimed portrayal of Ned Keene in *Peter Grimes* in 2010.

Andrew was Chorus Director of the WASO Chorus until 2024, and an Associate Professor of Music and Chair of Vocal Studies at the UWA Conservatorium of Music until 2025.



COUNT CAPULET

Christopher Hillier

Australian baritone Christopher Hillier's longstanding relationship with Opera Australia has seen him sing Zurga (*Les pêcheurs de perles*), Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*), Jupiter (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Schaunard (*La bohème*), and Ping (*Turandot*), and, in their touring productions, the title role (*Don Giovanni*), Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*).

Other performances include Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Gunther (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*), Conte di Luna (*Il trovatore*), Alfonso d'Este (*Lucrezia Borgia*), and Giorgio Talbot (*Maria Stuarda*) for Melbourne Opera; The Sergeant of Police (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Sir Thomas Bertram (*Mansfield Park*), and the world premiere of Richard Mills' *Galileo* for Victorian Opera; and Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*) for State Opera South Australia and Opera Queensland.

In concert, Christopher has appeared with the Sydney Symphony in *Fidelio* and the Canberra Symphony in *Messiah*, as well as in Bach's *St John Passion*, Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* and *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Haydn's Mass in *Time of War*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and the *Requiems* of Verdi, Fauré and Duruflé.



TYBALT

Kohsei Gilkes

Kohsei Gilkes is a Perth-born tenor and a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). Kohsei was a part of the West Australian Opera Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist Program of 2024/2025.

As a young artist, Kohsei was given opportunities to work with some of the best coaches and voices in Australia through Masterclasses, as well as language coaching and language lessons with consistent opportunity for work and scholarships to further vocal study.

Kohsei has been working professionally since 2021 and made his Principal Artist debut last year with West Australian Opera in the role of the role of Goro in *Madama Butterfly*.

His other roles include Don Ottavio: Don Giovanni (Freeze Frame Opera), L'Abate di Chazeuil: Adriana Lecouvreur (Freeze Frame Opera), Father Grenville: Dead Man Walking (Freeze Frame Opera) as well as many performances as a part of the WAO Chorus.

Roberts Emerging Artist



STÉPHANO

Ruth Burke

Ruth Burke is an Irish-Australian mezzo-soprano. Ruth graduated from the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2022 and was a 2024/25 Wesfarmers Young Artist with West Australian Opera. Professional highlights so far have included singing Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* with West Australian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Asher Fisch, Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with West Australian Opera (WAO), Second Woman/Second Witch in *Dido and Aeneas* (WAO), Rosina in *Barber of Seville* with Freeze Frame Opera (FFO), and Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* (FFO).

Ruth has also performed as the mezzo soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with Perth Symphonic Chorus, Mozart's *Requiem* with UWA Choral Society, and Beethoven's *Symphony No.9* with Darwin Symphony. In 2024/25 Ruth travelled to Austria to study at Stimme Leib und Seele where she studied the role of Der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, working with conductor Jennifer Condon as well as guest artists. With the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Ruth recently performed the role of Mary in *Der fliegende Holländer* and as soloist in *The Armed Man*.

Ensemble Artist supported by MM Electrical



GERTRUDE

Fiona Campbell

Fiona Campbell is one of Australia's most versatile and beloved classical singers — the national Limelight Award for Best Solo Performance 2011 among her many accolades.

Fiona has been a principal artist with all the major ensembles and orchestras in Australia and with Opera Australia, Opera Queensland, and West Australian Opera. Her international collaborators have included the Brodsky Quartet, Tokyo Philharmonic, Manchester Camerata, Prague Chamber Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Glyndebourne Festival Opera. She has toured with José Carreras in Japan, Korea and Australia, and with Barbara Bonney in Tokyo and London.

In recent seasons, she sang Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for The Adelaide Festival and was soloist with the Australian String Quartet, Perth Symphonic Chorus and the Queensland, Melbourne, Adelaide and West Australian Symphony Orchestras. She also appeared as Laura (*Iolanta*) and Flora (*La traviata*) for West Australian Opera.

Recently, Fiona became an inaugural member of Katie Noonan's vocal quartet AVÉ — Australian Vocal Ensemble — and the Creative Director of the Perth Symphony Orchestra.



DUKE OF VERONA

Jake Bigwood

Winner of both the Regency Prize and AM Parker award for excellence; Jake Bigwood graduated from the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) with distinction, alongside an honorary Diploma of the RAM.

Jake joined West Australian Opera as a Young artist for the 22/23 seasons and sang *il Maestro* (Prima la musica), *Angelotti*, *Sciarrone*, *Zuniga*, and *Colline* in addition to singing *Ashby* (*Fanciulla*) and *Colline* for Freeze Frame Opera. Jake has been a finalist in the Australian Singing Competition, JSRB Bel Canto Award, Italian Opera awards, and the Herald Sun Aria competition.

In 2025 Jake performed the role of The Bonze in *Madama Butterfly* with West Australian Opera and travelled to Bayreuth as a scholarship winner of the Wagner Stipendium program.

In 2026, Jake joins West Australian Opera for *Romeo et Juliette*, Sydney Symphony for *Götterdämmerung*, and Opera Australia for *La Boheme*.



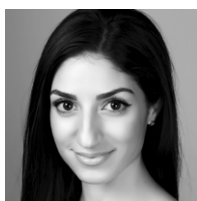
West Australian Opera

Chorus

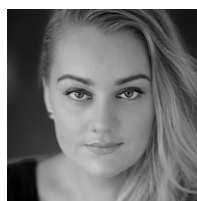
Sopranos



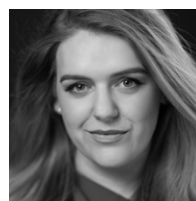
Alexandra Bak



Claire Condipodero



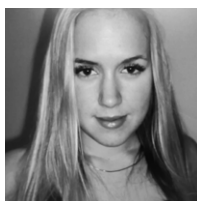
Leilah Fox*



Jessica Blunt^



Michelle Pryor



Lucy Mervik*



Pamela Andrews



Xiaojia Zhang

Mezzo Sopranos



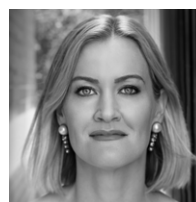
Caitlin Forrest



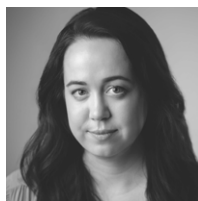
Belinda Butler



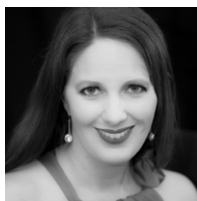
Elizabeth Vale



Brigitte Heuser



Chelsea Kluga



Courtney Pitman**



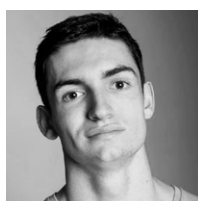
Morgan Halket



Stephanie Thyer

* Celebrating over 10 years
 ** Celebrating over 20 years
 ^ Roberts Emerging Artist

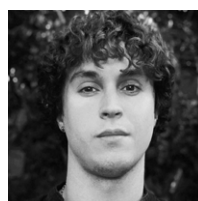
Tenors



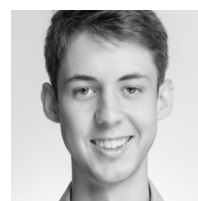
Tom Buckmaster



Vin Trikeriotis



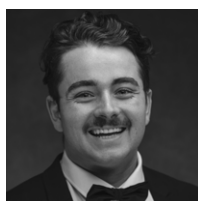
Jason Kroll



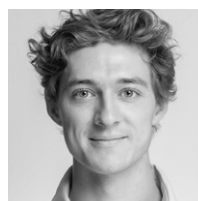
Euan MacMillan



Brett Peart



Ciaran McChord



**Keaton
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Ry Charleson

Basses



Sam Claxton



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David Woods



David Dockery**



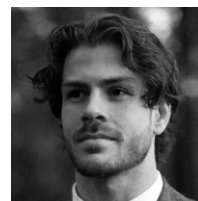
Devon Lake



**Christopher-Jack
Andrew**



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from Aveley Primary School
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October 2025
Image credit: The Hybrid Minds

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Riley Skevington
Alexandra Isted
Stephanie Dean
Christina Katsimbardis
Cerys Tooby
Samantha
Wickramasinghe
Luisa Theis
Beth Hebert
*Susannah Williams^*

2nd Violins

Zak Rowntree
Kate Sullivan
Sarah Blackman
Melanie Pearn
Amy Furfaro
Emma Hunt
William Huxtable
Sunmi Jung

Violas

Alex Brogan
Kierstan Arkleysmith
James Munro
Alison Hall
Helen Tuckey
Katherine Potter

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Associate Principal
*Guest Musician^*

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Jeremy Garside
Nick Metcalfe
Fotis Skordas
*Melinda Forsythe^*

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Robin Brawley
Mark Tooby
Christine Reitzenstein

Flutes

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Sonia Croucher

Oboes

Stephanie Nicholls
Jonathan Ryan

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Som Howie
Alexander Millier

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Adam Mikulicz
Chloe Turner

Horns

David Evans
Robert Gladstones
Julia Brooke
Frankie Lo Surdo

Trumpets

Jenna Smith
Sophie Kukulies
Koominka

Trombones

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Liam O'Malley
*Matthew Walker^*

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Alex Timcke

Percussion

Brian Maloney
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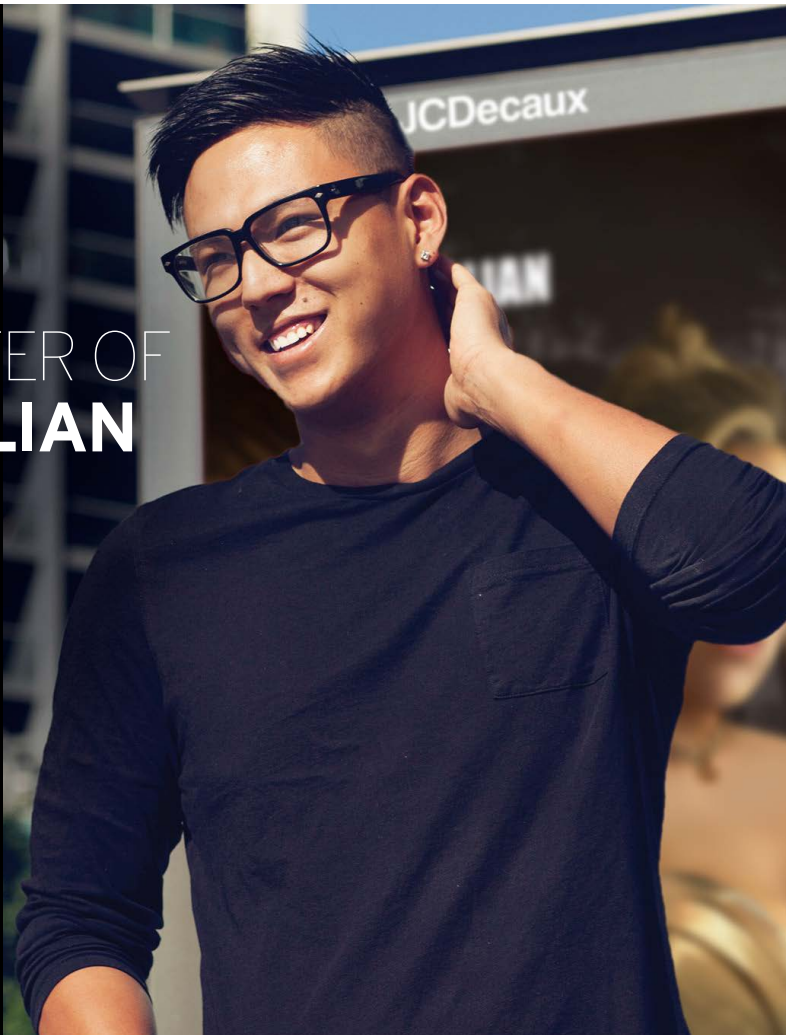
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Image: La Traviata backstage
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